

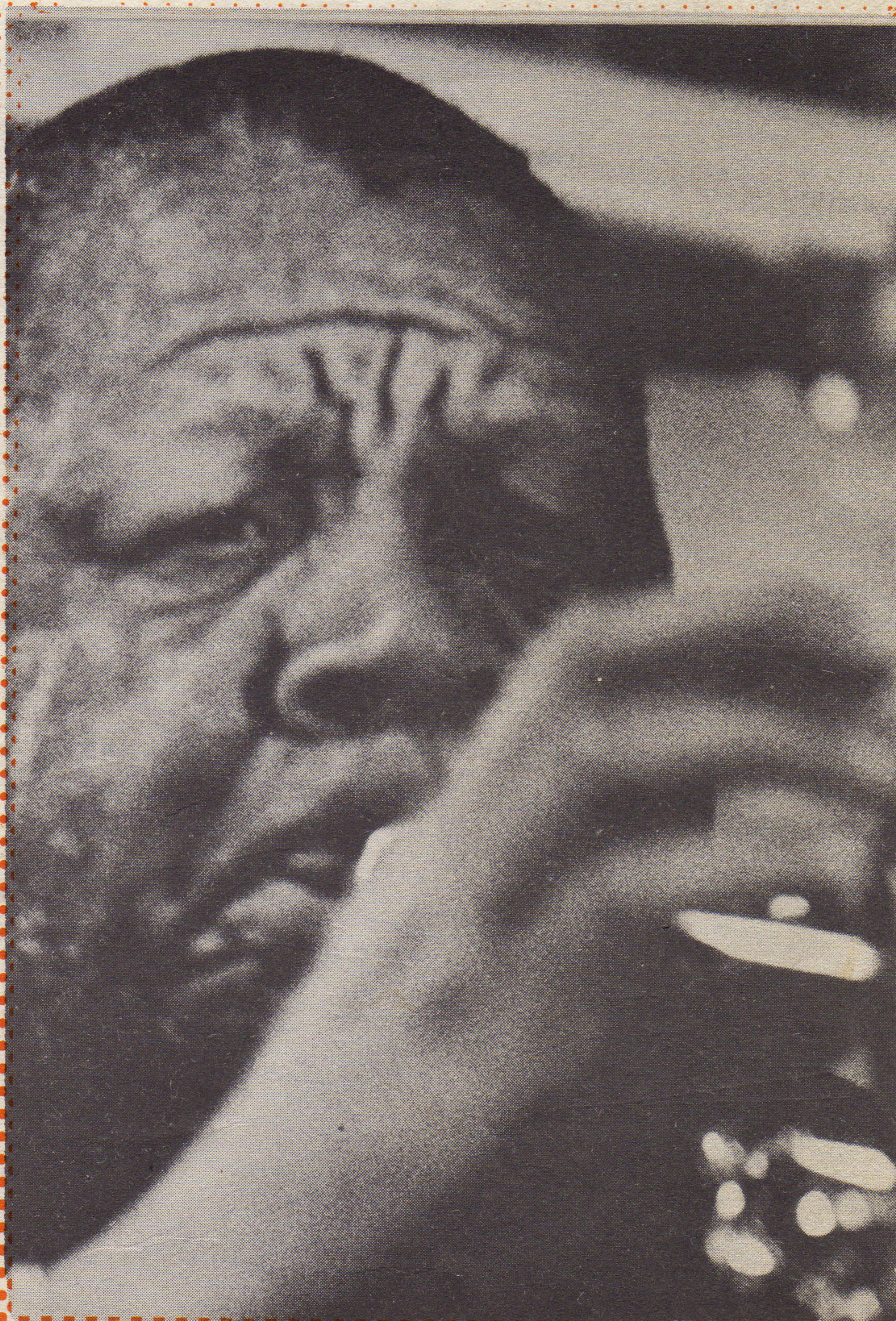
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 DURING THE late Henry Allen's last but one trip to this country I spent many days with him while he taped his autobiography. It was originally intended that it should be published in book form by Cassell & Company Ltd., but for a variety of reasons the plan has had to be dropped. On his final British trip I proposed to get Henry to fill in and enlarge certain parts of the autobiography, but an initial meeting convinced me that his health was such as to make this impossible. In fact he died within a couple of months of concluding this tour



which, I am certain, was undertaken only because medical expenses had taken most if not all of his savings. The autobiography was to be called, at Henry Allen's request, *Make Them Happy*, and Henry was particularly keen to correct what he felt were false impressions of early New Orleans days. This extract, and others that will follow, deal in the main with New Orleans and the musicians with whom Henry Allen played there. I have, as far as is possible, kept the story exactly as Henry told it, only making minor corrections in a few instances, though the order of telling has been slightly readjusted to follow a chronological sequence. I first met Henry Allen in 1958 and in the ensuing years my respect for him as a man and as a musician grew at each meeting, so that when I heard of his death I was conscious of the loss of someone whom I had come to regard as a personal friend — a feeling shared by many who knew him in this country. I am happy that extracts from his story can appear in *Jazz Monthly* and am grateful to Dr. Desmond Flower and Mr. David Polley of Cassell & Company Ltd., for their co-operation in making this possible.

ALBERT MCCARTHY



## THE EARLY YEARS / HENRY 'RED' ALLEN



**A**S FAR BACK as I can remember I was playing music, starting in my father's band when I was about eight years old. The band consisted of eleven pieces as a rule — three trumpets, two trombones, alto horn, baritone horn, two clarinets, and bass and snare drums — and I played either trumpet or alto horn. My other job with the band at this time was to carry the music, as frequently my father cut off the titles of the more popular pieces to avoid other bands copying them, and they were just called out as number one, number two, and so on. My mother stopped me playing the trumpet for a while, on account of the fact that she had seen some of the great musicians of the day with their cheeks puffed out and their necks protruding and reckoned the instrument was too strenuous for me! She told me to play an easier instrument and got me a violin, but though I took a few lessons from Peter Bocage I was never keen on it and the practice came to an end one day when a friend visited our house and found me playing it like a bass fiddle. Just as I was about to

make some excuse my father yelled at me and asked what I was doing playing the violin that way. I couldn't figure out how he knew but discovered that he had a mirror in his room and by looking into it could see what I was doing. After this I got back to practising on the trumpet again, though my father tried hiding it or turning the valves to keep me from blowing, not because he was really against my playing it but because he was trying to please my mother.

By day my father worked as a longshoreman and at this time most musicians had day jobs away from music. His band had probably more great musicians in it than any other I have heard of, such guys as Buddy Bolden, King Oliver, Big Eye Louis Nelson and many others I could name, and this was great for me though at the time and for many years afterwards I had no idea that they would be



recognised as pioneers or makers of jazz history. By now I was playing trumpet pretty well, my father having convinced my mother that it could be done without my having my cheeks puffed out or my neck protruding! I kept getting compliments from neighbours about my playing too and I think that my mother rather went for this.

Those parade jobs with my father meant a lot of walking. At first he would arrange for me to meet the band at some corner and then I could come in and play a number, generally getting a lot of applause, though whether for being good or just because I was a youngster is something I don't know. After a while I went all the way in the parades, walking miles and miles, and I just grew up in this setting. At one time Louis Armstrong and I happened to be in my father's band, on a parade — I just realise now what a brass section that could have been with Louis, my father, and myself — and already Louis was great and because he squeezed me I played as well as I could. My father wasn't a great jazzman but he had lots of power and was a fine musician as far as reading and organising was concerned, in addition to being an outstanding conductor. He brought a lot of guys into New Orleans from such places as Tipita and Morgan City, and at one time had two brothers of his in the band, Sam and George Allen. I've seen several early New Orleans photographs of parade bands where the drummer is listed as unknown, but it was my uncle, George Allen. We also had an uncle in Burbeck City, which is across the river from Morgan City, same as Algiers and New Orleans, by the name of Ezekiel Mack, and though I never did hear him personally I was told he could play well. Then, on my mother's side, an aunt of mine was a very fine organist and pianist who used to play in the church a lot. That gave me the chance to play in the church as well, on such numbers as *What a friend we have in Jesus*. That was my crip at that time — when I say crip, I mean my outstanding number:

**N**OWADAYS LOTS of people ask me about Louis, and as I remember they had a lot of great trumpeters around New Orleans but Louis was already coming up to top them all when I was a boy, though at the time I didn't pay too much attention — like, if I was to live this over, I'd have the same life again but would pay more attention to what was going on. Still, Louis was really great *then*, along with Buddy Petit and Henry Rene, and I admired, Louis, Rene and Chris Kelly, though I never did go for playing with the plunger myself like Chris, learning how to growl without one.

Most of the bands at this time played spirituals, because they believe in sadness at birth and rejoicing at death. That's why they went in for big parties when someone was dead, and everybody would have a band for a funeral, it didn't matter whether they were poor or had a lot of money or belonged to a lot of clubs and societies. If you belonged to four or five societies or clubs, you had four or five bands. If you didn't belong to any, they would put a saucer on your chest — the deceased's chest that is — and others would walk into view the body and contribute five, ten, fifteen or twenty cents, or a quarter, whatever could be spared. Now whatever was raised, you got a band to coincide with this, musicians getting three dollars for a parade and the leader four dollars, the extra dollar being for 'phone calls, or if the band already had a gig on the same day then the dollar was clear. Talking of 'phone calls, it wasn't like it was today then, for the number of people with phones in New Orleans was not all that great and the lines seemed to be always open so you could talk

as long as you wanted for a nickel. My father always gave the number of our local grocery store where the owner, a very kind guy, would call anyone to the 'phone that was wanted. If a call came through for my father he would go to the front of the shop and holler his name, then neighbours would shout from house to house until it reached us. Maybe then my father would have to get dressed properly to go and take the call, but nobody every seemed to mind waiting and it was still all done for a nickel! Usually calls were about jobs and I would go along with my father to get the men for a funeral or parade or whatever it was, and if it was during the carnival days or Mardi Gras there would be a shortage of available men and my father would be foraging about in the places out in the country, picking up musicians like Punch Miller or Papa Celestin to fill in...

Sometimes during a funeral we would go into the church — the band that is — and play these different hymns. That's where I would come in as the watchman, for the band would then go over to a bar while I would lie on the ground or sit outside until the people are coming out of the service. Now, when I got that cue, I would dash over the bar and call the guys. The snare-drum player would be the first one I'd call, he'd then make a roll and he's rolling until everyone comes out of the bar. When everybody's there the bass drummer would hit three notes, I mean three beats — no cymbal, very slow. As a matter of fact, they're organising what number they will play, and they go into that number. Then the snare drummer takes off the snares — they give a kind of tim-tom effect — and that's where the sadness came out, with people probably crying or screaming. Now it's a slow walk to the cemetery and when you get there — from a kid up, I done this — the sermon going on and, when they say "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust" or whatever goes on, well the drum gives a roll again from outside the cemetery, and they're ready to come back again, and the band plays that first number "Didn't he ramble, he rambled till the butchers cut him down". After that, everybody's having a ball, parading back in tempo, the band playing different numbers. That's when my dad used to say "Take it, son", that's where I would come on and play the jazz numbers.

We didn't go straight into the hall as soon as we got back — people would be jumping in the streets and everything — and if they have two or three bands they're going into a buck, by 'buck' I mean a session when the bands play against each other. When the bands got back home they might at first make for their hall but they'd never go straight in, you'd first go across the street, to the corner, come back around and then go into the hall. But you then came back and played for ten or fifteen minutes out there on the porch, which we called the gallery. Now, if you're a member of a club, you'd get a dollar for carrying the banner, fifty cents for carrying the flag, and it's up to you to give the two guys something that's holding the tassles on each side of the banner. Sometimes a musician had to double from playing at this funeral or parade to go and work at a dance the same night — I'm sure that's one reason why the guys had such strong embouchures around New Orleans. Now the job that night, wherever you're playing, that calls for a meal — all contracts call for a meal during the time of the dance, and also state that you must be paid for the job right after the dinner or the supper you're having. And you'd probably have gumbo or ham and potato salad, you could get either one, one to each musician. But I liked playing with Chris Kelly because he was a little superstitious, he didn't eat anybody's food but what he brought with him you know. So that would give me two chances, and I would make sure I got Chris's share, having gumbo *and* a ham and salad.



When I say Chris was superstitious, I mean that he always had the feeling that somebody would poison him or do him wrong, so always brought his own meals.

**I** READ A STATEMENT in a book, I think it was Nick La Rocca's book, that he was one of the originators of jazz. Well, who can say who *was* the originator of this? Anyway, he mentioned that when he went to Chicago, the recording people went on trips to New Orleans to find somebody who could play jazz and couldn't find them. I resent this remark very much. Although I have nothing against what he played, or what anybody plays, as far as that, we certainly had a lot of people around New Orleans at that time who could play good jazz and I guess that they could not have looked very hard, or maybe they were looking just one way racewise, whether they went uptown, downtown, back o'town or what. Whether white or coloured people started all this I really don't know — it was started before my time — but the coloured people must have had something to do with it.

I remember hearing a little boogie-woogie, but we didn't have too many pianists in New Orleans who were well known at this time. Instead of using a piano we generally used a guitar, and I think the reason for this was that everybody had a piano in their home, whether they played it or not, my guess being that as many as 90% of the houses had one. Guys like Clarence Williams used to plug numbers from door to door; he'd come into your home and play your piano, and sell his numbers — the price would be around ten cents whatever the number was — then he'd go next door and play again, and so on. In addition every saloon or tavern had a piano in it and you were free to go in there and bang on the piano, whether you could play it or not. So a guy taught himself, but they didn't learn within the boogie idiom or anything like that, because they thought they would have to play along with a band. We did have a few boogie woogie players but they weren't all that many in number. Another big reason why few of the bands used a piano was that most of the halls, the dance halls rather, didn't have one, so you'd need to borrow a piano from someone's home in order to use it. Now it was easy to get thirty or forty guys to help you take this piano out of these people's home up to the hall, but where people stopped loaning the piano out, it was getting it back. After the dance they had trouble in getting anyone to haul it back. To get back to the parades again: The uniform for parades was white pants, blue shirts. Naturally the hats were reversible, you could take the top off and leave the white on, but when we played a funeral we wore dark suits to mark the sadness of the occasion. My father used to give dances to collect enough money to get the uniforms, and you can see in some of the old photographs the musicians with the uniforms on, including my father with the great hat that had all the trimmings on. When they had these great dances I would be there all night, now and then nodding off for a few minutes, but going straight on to school next morning. My father was very strict about that and made sure that I went to school always, and I did pretty well there at Macdonnel 32 which is in Algiers, that's on the west New Orleans side, so not being a drop-out I made it through to High School before the trumpet finally took over completely.

They had a lot of great parade bands in New Orleans when I was a kid, some of them still going today incidentally, such as the Onward, the Tuxedo, and the Excelsior. As a matter of fact I played so regularly with the Excelsior Band that some people must have thought that I was a full time member, starting out by

playing the drums — either bass drum or snare drum — and managing to get a few good gigs as a result. When I was a kid I was also a very fine — though I say it myself — ukelele player, having good wrists and the ability to pick up chords very quickly. After a while there were so many good ukelele players around that I gave up and concentrated solely on the trumpet. The first time I played one of the dancing schools — where the band never stops and goes right on through — I was on a parade and a very fine bass man by the name of Doug Ernest offered me a job that night. So I got in touch with my father and went right on and played that job after he gave me permission to take it. There was a guy in the band, a very fine trombonist by the name of Freddie Bubu, who admired me and he told me that he thought I played like Louis. Anyway, we played all that night; only thing was these guys, every one of them, was getting a drink of water now and then, and I didn't know what was happening. I was trying to play right on through, but that was supposed to be the rest period, something that I didn't understand.

**L**OOKING BACK on the jobs I played in New Orleans away from my father's band I remember working at a couple of halls, one was called the Young Friends Of Honour — we called it the Turtleback — and another was the Sacred Heart. I also played at the Eagle's Hall which was at the end of Algiers at a place called McDonoughville, then at a few places around Gretna, all of them being within about a three-mile radius of home. One time I remember getting caught up in a jam session with Kid Thomas and our group were supposed to have won the contest, anyway they gave us the prize which was a sachet bag. The people at the hall didn't seem to like this too much and on the ground that we were kids they had some policeman come and take the bag back and it was then given to the Kid Thomas group. We couldn't do anything about it because we had no business in the place in any case, on account of our age. Soon after this I ran into George Lewis and my father gave George permission to use me on a job. The very first night I played with George someone fired off a pistol in the place we were working and the police raided it, as a result of which the whole band were taken down to the station. Fortunately they didn't keep us in prison long and released the whole band. Another time I played with Willie Cornish, a great trombone player at that time, and he used the kids band for a job in a cabaret where they used to keep the whiskey in the basin — what we called a face basin in which you washed — in case the police came in. If they did arrive all they had to do was to tilt the basin and waste the whiskey, and no evidence! If someone offered us a drink we would have a coca-cola and whoever offered it to us had to pay the price of a whiskey to the cabaret owners, though this was alright by me as I wasn't drinking anyway.

One of the greatest of the trumpeters in New Orleans around this time was Emmanuel Perez, and I had the great fortune of working with him. As a matter of fact I worked with most of the guys around there on various jobs but the two men who took the most interest in me were both trombonists, Yank Johnson and Harrison Barnes. It was Yank who got me a job with the famous Sam Morgan band, though I was just used as an extra with each guy giving me a dollar apiece or maybe fifty cents, just what they felt like giving. The Morgan band usually worked at a place called the Astoria Ballroom and I remember that Sam Morgan had been taken ill and so Yank Johnson had brought me along to fill in for him. Meanwhile the other members of the band had sent for Henry Rena to



take Morgan's place and that's how I became the extra, though I must admit that this job was one of the greatest kicks of my life, for I could enjoy listening to Rena without having to be on a parade. The band had just got hold of a number called *Weary blues*, so they passed around the sheet music for this and quite naturally everybody wanted to show their musicianship and didn't want to be seen peeping at the music too closely; they wanted to show off to the public and prove themselves to be fast sight readers. In fact, though, the Morgan band had already run it down a few times in private rehearsals, but Rena had trouble getting into it until Yank nudged him on the leg and told him that it was the same thing as *Shake it and break it*. Once Rena realised what it was he really went into it.

**M**Y FIRST trip away from New Orleans was a job with the Sidney Desvigne band on the "Island Queen" which went as far as Cairo and then back again. We had such guys in the band as Bill Matthews, trombone, "Pops" Foster, and Walter Pichon who was one of my ace boys, we had done a lot together since our school days. On the boat Pichon became a very good player of the calliope. It was when I got back from this trip that I heard from King Oliver.

Quite a few people I knew had left New Orleans to play with Oliver — Barney Bigard, Albert Nicholas, Paul Barbarin and Luis Russell amongst them — but then some of the men dropped out of his band and he sent home for Willie Foster, Paul Barnes and myself. We left together and joined the band in St. Louis in April 1927. I have read in some articles that I joined the Oliver band in Chicago but I didn't get there until some time after this. I could never understand why they use terms like "Chicago Jazz", "New Orleans Jazz" or "New York Jazz", because I made records with the Chicago Rhythm Kings before I had ever been there. Anyway I met the Oliver band in St. Louis and it was a great experience for me, but nothing to what I felt when we arrived in New York and saw the banners there running from one side of the street to the other, with a sign saying "The East Meets The West". We played against, or rather alongside, Fletcher Henderson's band and the Fess Williams band, and in the latter group I had the pleasure of hearing Jimmy Harrison for the first time.

After a while the guys in the band got a little nervous at facing the top bands in New York and went to talk to King Oliver, Oliver reassured everyone by pointing out "We're playing what we know" and as a result we began to gain in confidence. We had some great musicians in the band and they included Omer Simeon, Barney Bigard and Paul Barnes in the reed section, Tick Gray — a very good trumpet man who is not too well known — along with King and myself made up the trumpet section, and there was Kid Ory on trombone, Paul Barbarin and Willie Foster — "Pop" Foster's brother — in the rhythm section. I stayed a little while with Oliver and we worked at the Savoy Ballroom, though as a matter of fact I was not too keen on being away from home because I was used to my mother doing everything like seeing to my clothes and getting all my meals, and didn't like the idea of having to do everything myself. I found it hard to get used to the idea of being away, particularly for any length of time, in these far parts. Fortunately King Oliver took a liking to me and insisted that I lived with him at his sister's place, so one way and another I began to get some confidence. We did pretty well against some of the great bands in New York, but I felt that I wasn't too well established there, particularly in my knee pants! You see at this time it didn't matter

what size you were, until you reached a certain age in New Orleans you wore knee pants. I was saved by a guy called Buchanan who rented a suit for me from a rental firm under the Savoy, so I felt pretty great then and began to take more interest in what was going on. When we took the stand we played and everybody gathered around the bandstand to hear what we had to offer, and then the next band would play and after that we were back again, so it was real interesting. Then our gig at the Savoy ended and we were to have gone into the Cotton Club, but something happened there, though to this day I never really found out what it was — maybe finance — and Ellington got the job. We were very disappointed at this, for we had been certain of getting the job and had been promised it for sure. Instead we set off to play a dance at Baltimore but we had very poor luck there. Our first dance was completely rained off, so we thought we had better do something to cover ourselves in the future, particularly as our room rent and meal bills were beginning to run up and our landlady was starting to cut down on our meals — King Oliver used to have this bowl of sugar and water along with about half a loaf of bread before he got into his meal — and the boys got a little desperate and tried to get started on their meal before King knew about it. Then King made a deal with the lady to bring him in fifteen or twenty minutes before the meal and serve us all at the same time. But the lady was still a little worried because the loot wasn't coming on, so to make sure we got our loot at the next dance we insured it — if it rained or anything, we'd get paid. So it rained on that day, and the curfew must have been eight o'clock, because it rained right up to eight o'clock and then stopped! That threw us out, made our contract with the insurance no good, and to make matters worse the rain had messed up the light fixtures at the place we were supposed to work. Everyone got discouraged and the first one to leave was Clarence Black, he was a violinist who was fronting the band, and when he got home he formed his own group and sent for Omer Simeon. Most of us went back to New York, still trying to stick around in case any jobs came up and with King Oliver still trying to hold us, but nothing happened and I went on home to New Orleans.

**I**HAD NOT BEEN home long before I got a job with Walter "Fats" Pichon, working at a club called The Pelican about four nights a week, and this worked out very good. There were two bands sharing the job, the one led by "Fats" Pichon and another led by Oscar "Papa" Celestin, and we used to play against each other. Guy Kelly was in Celestin's band and he and I became the drawing cards, with a lot of people coming along to hear us blowing against each other, though Guy and I became very good friends anyway. The funny thing was that my friends and Guy's friends didn't get along too well for some reason, and they felt that there ought to be more saltiness between us just because we were playing against each other, but after a while Guy and I got fed up with this and we decided to go to Chicago together. Guy did go but I had another offer and made up my mind to stick around the home area a little longer, working with Fate Marable on the riverboats.

I'd been listening to Fate Marable since I was small, when I used to go on the levee over in Algiers and the music from his band on the boats would carry across the river. I've already mentioned that I had worked on the "Island Queen" with Sidney Desvigne — this was one of the fleet owned by the Streckfus brothers — and I think that Fate had heard about me as a result of this, for he came into The Pelican one time and after hearing me offered this job. When I started on the boat I got several raises as the Streckfus

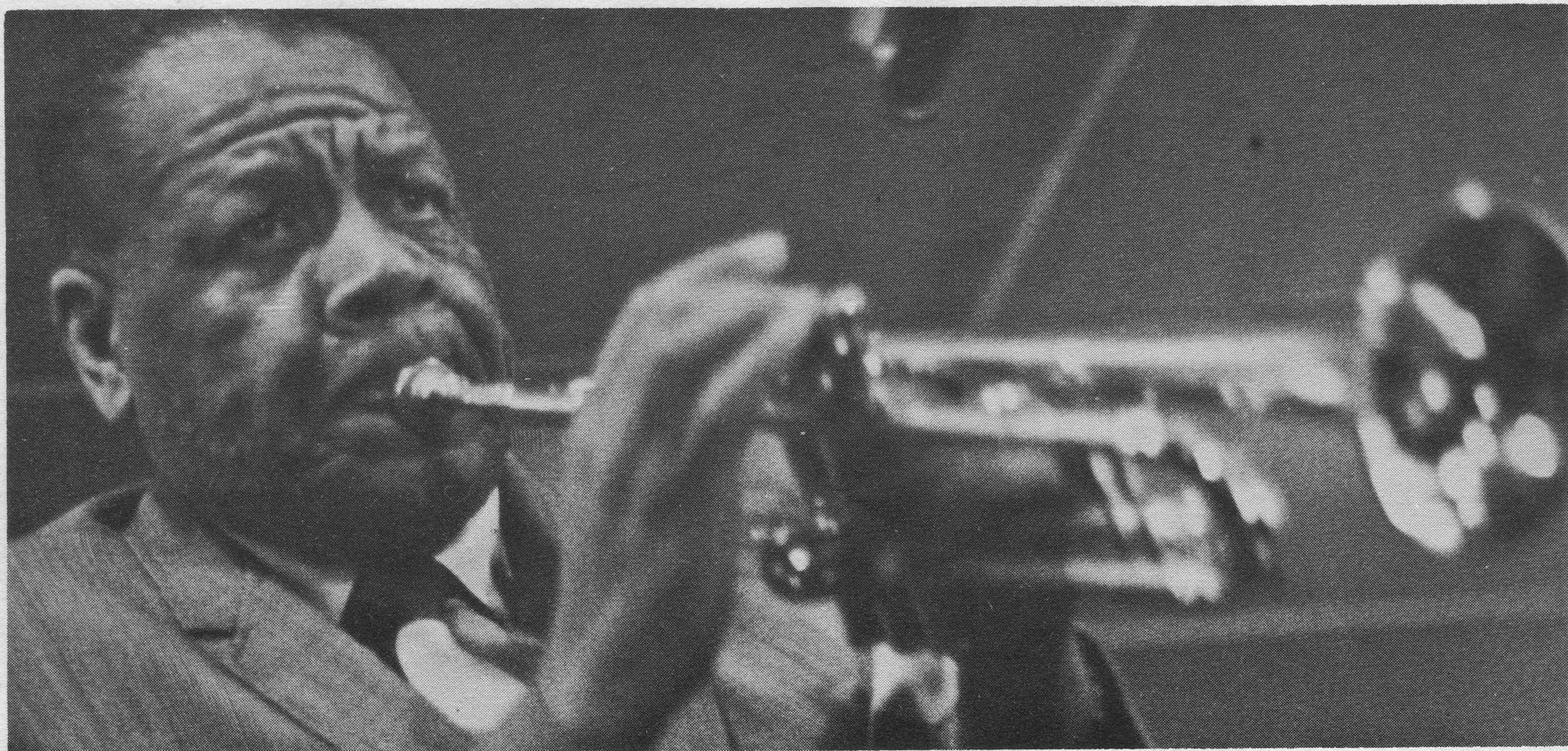


brothers wanted me to stay on. There were five of them, all brothers, and they were really interested in the music and employed most of the famous early musicians. The other musicians in the band were from St. Louis and included Albert Snaer on trumpet, bassist Al Morgan, and a guitarist called Al Sears — not the tenor player who made his name with Duke Ellington. For a short while Willie Humphreys came in on clarinet, but there were a few changes now and then. We started by playing in and around New Orleans, then we'd leave for a scheduled trip of maybe two months, but usually we'd be gone for three. We didn't dash madly on to St. Louis, but the boat worked its way up, playing night after night in different places. A lot of people think, when you mention riverboats, you had to check your pistols when you came on, and that the boats were full of women good-timing, but I didn't find it like this. I do know that everyone had a good time but it wasn't as wild as some writers say, and I can't remember personally ever seeing any gambling on board when I was playing. We played stops such as Memphis, in fact when we got there we would play two nights, and it was here that a guy called Loren Watson first heard me, or maybe heard of me, because I have the feeling that King Oliver may have mentioned my name to him. We finally would get to St. Louis and play there, and when you reached there it was every tub — that means you have to get off and get you a room outside the city, because the boat would be stationed there a while. We had lots of fun on the boat though, because they had a cook on board who was from New Orleans and I'd suggest that he cook red beans and rice. I found out that he was a great cigar smoker and kept him happy with supplies so he would fix these New Orleans dishes, though the guys in the band who came from St. Louis weren't so keen on rice and always gave us the chance to have our fill!

There were some great musicians out of St. Louis, guys like Charlie Creath, Dewey Jackson and Fate Marable, and as they all played the boats I had heard most of them quite early in New Orleans. One time Creath, Jackson and Marable were all in the same band together, but as they were all leaders in their own right there was some tension going on. I remember once hearing them in a cabaret and when Dewey — a great blues player — ran over his horn to warm it up the people would start screaming. Then Charlie Creath would hit just one note and draw attention — his tone was so big and wide that he would pull everything together — and I thought

that both were great trumpeters. When we were berthed in St. Louis I would get around and hear different people, and I remember listening to Johnny "Bugs" Hamilton who later became well known when he played with Fats Waller, and Blue, Reputed Blue as he called himself, who later on was on a couple of my recordings for Victor. His real name was Thornton Blue.

**A**T THE TIME there seemed to me to be so many great players around St. Louis that it's hard to name them all. Others I remember are Nat Storey — a really fine trombonist — drummer Floyd Campbell, and a pianist called Burroughs Lovingood, who as a matter of fact, I still correspond with and is now working in Washington, D.C. Lovingood was a great pianist and we worked together with Fate Marable on the boat, using *two* pianos. I remember that Fate would get these hard numbers, and play them with just the bass backing him, probably trying to show Lovingood up or something. But Lovingood was a little fast musicianwise, so Fate would study first, hold the music on his lap and run it over a few times, and when pass it out to Lovingood while everybody's looking. And if there was a really hard passage coming up Fate would decide to go and have a drink of water, just when the piano passage was due, and leave Lovingood out there. But he pulled through alright, it always turned out o.k. Fate gave me a message when I left the boat, for Jelly Roll Morton, but I had trouble leaving in any case. You had to put up fifty dollars when you joined the band on the boat — a sort of guarantee of good behaviour — but though you were supposed to get it back when you left I never did have it, still haven't to this day. I went home to New Orleans on account of the fact that my grandfather had passed and I thought, and my family thought, that I should be there for the burial. When I got back after this to the boat they wanted me to stay on, but I had already given in my notice and told them I was going on to New York. They didn't really believe that my story about my grandfather passing was true, claiming I had made it up to get away. First Streckfus ordered me to stay, then he offered me a little more money to remain — I had had raises a couple of times before — and also Fate tried hard to keep me. But I had to go this time, because I had wires from both Luis Russell and Duke Ellington offering me jobs with their band, and was determined to make New York City.









# PETER IND / TALKS TO MARK GARDNER



**P**ETER IND was born in Uxbridge, Middlesex, on July 20, 1928. He studied piano and harmony at Trinity College, taking up the bass at the age of 19. After experience with dance bands and some jazz combos in England and a couple of years with a band on the Queen Mary, he emigrated to the United States in April 1951. He studied with Lennie Tristano and was one of a group of important musicians who came under Tristano's influence. Subsequently he played and recorded with Tristano, Lee Konitz, Warne Marsh, Sal Mosca, Buddy Rich, Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins and many others.

He has been involved in jazz as a record producer as well as a player. In the late 'fifties he had his own recording studios in New York and supervised many sessions for the Verve, Bethlehem and Charlie Parker labels. However the main function of the studio was a meeting point for colleagues such as Marsh, Mosca and Konitz. Much of the music they made together at their weekly sessions was preserved on tape by Peter Ind and the best of it is now being issued on Ind's Wave label which he reactivated last year.

Peter has not confined himself to playing and producing records. Since returning to England three years ago he has devoted a considerable amount of time to teaching. He is also a talented painter and writer. His book *Cosmic Metabolism and Vortical Accretion* shows his grasp and insight into philosophy and science and contains some interesting theories on the origins of life, energy and our culture, based in part on the work of Wilhelm Reich.

Peter's wife is a New Yorker and the couple live with their two daughters at Uxbridge where the following interview took place.

*To start at the beginning, when did you first become consciously interested in music?*

WELL, I started when I was eight years old when I began playing violin. This was due to the school

more than anything else. Both my parents played a little. My mother played violin a bit and my father played piano. But I never thought of being a musician; this just gradually evolved. I played violin a bit and took lessons from the music teacher at school. This was in Uxbridge, well over 30 years ago. Then I took up piano. You know, it's funny the way these things go. The family idea was that I play violin and my sister play the piano and I suppose my parents had some thought of a musical duo of kinds. But my sister was never really interested in it. And I think one way to get at our father after he had given her her piano lesson, I would come in and play the things she was supposed to be practising. This was my own way of rebellion. Anyway I gradually got more

and more interested in the piano. What I had against the violin was that then it was really hard to get what I would now call a jazz sound out of it. Only I didn't know at the time. Sometimes I could make it speak but more often than not the violin overcame me, but with the piano, I could get a sound out of it. So I began to teach myself harmony. Not that I knew if I was playing a seventh chord...I just knew there were certain notes that went together and certain chords went together. It was a primitive sort of harmony. I learned that way in a few keys. And in those days — I was aged 10 or 11 — I didn't have the patience to take it through keys and learn how it relates. I had no idea. A lot of what I did I stumbled upon accidentally so that it took me a long time to learn things which if I'd had proper tuition, I would have learned very quickly. But on the other hand it did give me a firm rooting in music. Then, during the war years, I started to work as a piano player, mostly locally and I picked up most of the tunes by ear, the stuff they would play on the radio.

*This would be with dance bands, I suppose?*

THAT'S RIGHT and at that time I didn't distinguish between dance music and jazz or anything

else. All I knew was that the music I was interested in had this lively feeling and I felt a certain amount of guilt about it because I had been brought up to believe that only classical music was real music and that anything remotely pertaining to popular music was culturally bad. So I did it with an underlying feeling of unease but enjoyed it anyway! It was that mixture.

*When were you first aware of jazz as something different?*

WELL, I didn't think too much about it because in those days jazz was thought of as the old music,

it wasn't thought of as improvised music. There was no pretentiousness about it. What I learned, I learned the hard way. My advancement in music came about because instead of playing all the old tunes for dancing like *Margie*, *My blue heaven* and all those kind of things, I began to learn tunes like *Laura* which were a little more sensitive. And that was when I became aware that there was such a thing as commerciality in music because if you played at one of those local dances and you played *Laura* people would not really enjoy it but if you played *Margie*, *My blue heaven* or *Somebody stole my gal* they would be overjoyed. So I learned that there was music and *music*. But to get back to my awareness of jazz, that came through this pianist friend of mine called Mount Ross who lives fairly near here and he's a very fine piano player. He now plays mostly organ. He was a great



influence and this was in the period of about 1942-44. A few of us, as friends together, who used to play piano — it was later that I bought a bass and began to form the nucleus of a group — would listen to things. In those days it was the King Cole Trio — I used to dig that — and Art Tatum and the Kenton Band with Eddie Safranski. What I got out of this, I see the same thing with my students. They come to jazz from what I call a topical standpoint. Whatever they happen to hear, it takes their fancy and they think 'that's the greatest'. And if anyone had said to me then that there were other things besides Stan Kenton's Band I would have vehemently denied it. This to me was where it was. I've found that in teaching this proves to be a bit of a stumbling block. One has to get across that there are other things without disturbing the student's enjoyment of what he has discovered. And I'm glad I wasn't disturbed from enjoying Kenton at that time. It was nice music, it was outgoing and the guys in the band obviously enjoyed playing and that was at a time when there was still life in those big bands.

*In jazz one seems to get led on. You hear Kenton and then you find that a soloist, in say, the Kenton band makes a record and so you are drawn into the larger framework of jazz. Its a hit and miss thing but eventually you begin to understand the roots.*

THAT'S RIGHT. I think I became aware of jazz as something different when I began to work

on the boats. I liked it, I listened to all kinds of things. I was working in a Palais band in, I think, 1947 and I heard one of Bird's recordings and it sounded quite strange to me. It moved me but not in the way that I would think now. It took me by surprise and it did something to me inside but I would have been far from admitting that I liked it. It was just like strange music to me. And then I remember going through a period when I thought that Dizzy was really something but Bird wasn't half as good as Dizzy! This was the period before I really began to orient myself in it. I think a lot of what I liked in it was the excitement which included the musical effect and so forth, rather than the actual musicality of what the musicians were doing. So the beauty of a wonderfully creative line probably escaped me then.

*You were still playing piano then?*

I WAS playing piano and bass. I still had aspirations to be a classical musician and I thought I

would stay in dance bands for awhile as this was a way of earning a living. I enjoyed it but I felt that one day I would be a classical player.

*I suppose you were improvising lines, even in the dance bands?*

YES BUT without knowing that this was there it was. Also, I was never a really quick reader

and so I would partly improvise to make up for my lack of reading ability. So there got to be some lack of clarity about that. I didn't realise that the improvising was good in itself, or potentially good anyway. I looked upon it as a way of getting around my lack of quickness in reading. I could always go and play with a band and play a line with them and get away with it as I thought. They call it busking in those bands and in the States they call it faking

which is a good indication of where most musicians think it is. As though it is some sort of phoney effort! I worked in the Palais band for about a year and a half and learned a lot about music. Then I met Joe Saye who was a very fine, skilled musician and he was a real good influence. The only thing in retrospect, I think Joe really dug the music but at that time he didn't really get into the improvising and perhaps there was no room for that in this country. He had his trio — piano, bass and guitar — and it was very skilfully arranged music, very beautiful, but it was like playing a set piece to perfection, as well as we were able. Lennie Tristano and George Shearing were influences on this group and possibly King Cole. Remember that Shearing then hadn't developed into the Shearing that we know today. He was just finding his way, and I think in many ways it was more beautiful, what he was doing then. He wrote some nice tunes and he was a very accomplished musician. We shouldn't avoid the fact, although he may not be held in highest regard today, that Shearing is a most skilled player.

Anyhow I then started to play in some of the London clubs and I enjoyed it — with Victor Feldman sometimes, Ronnie Scott was around, and Aubrey Franks — those are the guys that I remember. Ronnie Ball was coming up about the same time that I was then. I left Joe Saye to join Tommy Sampson and that was then I first met Phil Seaman and a lot of the guys, like Bill Skeets, who are now in session work were with that band. It was hard times then. We would drive three or four hundred miles from Manchester to Hunstanton and play on the pier and there would be 10 people there. I think Tommy invested all the money he had to keep the band going. I was pretty wild and I enjoyed it. I still didn't realise what jazz was so jazz didn't come into the picture, as such, until much later. My picture of jazz was what in the States they called moudy figs. I didn't use that term for improvisation and the improvisation was tinged with guilt on my part anyway.

*What tunes and originals were they playing in the Sampson Band? Were they playing bebop tunes?*

A CERTAIN amount of them, like *One bass hit* which of course I would remember. And there

were a lot of very nicely arranged standards. They were arranged within the band. It was a big band but it was wilder than the Heath Band and there was always a chance for the small group within the band so we had an opportunity to blow. But its peculiar that I liked playing this way. I never thought about it too much because I still had the feeling that after all it wasn't real music. It was just fun and at this time I was still taking lessons and starting to get involved in the symphony world and consciously believing 'that's where it is'. In fact I turned down work in a symphony orchestra when I left the boats for the sake of going to the States. My visa came through at the same time and there was a chance of a job in a symphony but I turned it down to go to the U.S.A. And of course I've no regrets in that direction now. But at the time it was like being muddled up between what I thought was right which was the environmental influence — the cultural or civilised influence — against what I felt underneath I really enjoyed. Now I see quite clearly that any real achievement in art comes from the depth, out of wanting to do something as an ideal. Today a lot of the young artists, a lot of the young jazz musicians, do it because they think its the thing, rather than having this deep feeling of wanting to play and to enjoy themselves. And if you do enjoy it you communicate it; it comes across.



*Can you do this even without an audience?*

OH YES, even then. Take these tapes I'm putting out on Wave Records now. They were just done as get-togethers, to play and enjoy ourselves and that feeling comes over in the music, even though its 10 years later.

*When did you abandon piano altogether for the bass and decide that this would be your instrument?*

THAT WAS a gradual changeover. I got more work as a bass player and the knowledge I had from piano helped me as a bass player and anyway I was never that good a piano player. I think I had the ear for it but wasn't quick enough with the reading and also with technique; I just wasn't that good at it. So I concentrated more energy in practising the bass and then when I started to study I took lessons with Tim Bell and he really straightened me out. He's a good player, a really solid player, and knows the bass. So I worked with him for quite a while.

In those days — and I don't think I'm over-romanticising it — if there was anything on the radio, like Tim with the Cyril Stapleton Band we would listen. Although the band was commercial in a way, you could tell that the guys really enjoyed playing and with any band like that we would sit with our ears glued to the set. I would be listening for the bass which was always hard to hear because they never recorded it or miked it that well. But we really listened. And if we got a 78 record you could remember it right from beginning to end. Today there is a glut of music. There are so many LPs you can't even play them all.

*Were you aware then of people like Ray Brown and Oscar Pettiford?*

YES — RAY BROWN more than Oscar Pettiford, mostly through *One bass hit* which was the start of it and one or two other things he did with Dizzy's band. I wasn't aware of Jimmy Blanton at that time. I really wasn't knowledgeable in jazz for a long time. Anyway, after leaving the Sampson band I got this job on the Queen Mary and that was really the starting point because then I got to New York. It was such a different scene. As much as anything, one of the things that impressed me was to see grown men playing and really enjoying it. I'd never seen that before. As kids we enjoyed ourselves but the concept was that when you grew up you lost all that or you just weren't that way. And to see these guys that were probably in their 'forties really enjoying themselves playing, that helped me to get through some of my cultural blinkers. This was around 1949 and it was a contrast in so many ways. This country where there was the rationing, the austerity, you couldn't get anything. You get on the boat and have a big meal, a meal like hadn't had in years. There was plenty of meat, the sweets were delicious and there was all this variety. So — five days on the boat, living a life of real luxury. Four and a half hours work a day at the most and when we get through our playing about one o'clock in the morning we organise a session and we play for ourselves. We play until about five and then we go down to the kitchen and have a breakfast of cereal, cream, bacon and eggs — whatever we want — then we wake up at one o'clock and start the day off again with a big meal. It was much cooler than it has ever been since. There was a certain thing about the boat scene then...it was so soon after the war, about three years, and the thing yet hadn't got into pace. The airline flights were only just beginning to get under way. Almost

everybody travelled by ocean and it was really luxury and everybody treated it that way.

Various musicians travelled across — King Cole travelled across with his trio and various other guys that were on the scene who were on tours so we'd meet other musicians. And in our own band there were jazz conscious musicians. In the beginning there was Ronnie Ball and myself, Bill LeSage and I think Vic Ash. Ronnie and myself became quite good friends and this was the start of a long association. Then later on Dill Jones and Bruce Turner were on the boat. We'd get into New York and as soon as we were on shore we'd be shopping in this wonderful world of riches and it really was that then. There's no comparison now with what it was like 20 years ago. True there was the violent aspect but you never got to see that, there was so much else going on that you never realised that side of it. And the violence was not like racial violence but organised crime which you accept is always going on especially around the dockland area. But there was a night life that went on all night. It was only sort of quietening down about 4 o'clock when the last of the clubs closed.

*What clubs were active then? Was the Royal Roost still going? Or had Bop City taken over?*

BOP CITY was going — I think that opened just after we were there. I never went to the Roost so I can't be sure about that but the Deuces was open and a place called the Orchid Room and some of the other clubs I can remember but I can't remember the names. I have this memory of spending a set listening to Bird and Fats Navarro and Bud Powell, Curley Russell and Max Roach, and going across and listening to George Shearing for a set and hearing Lennie and then Roy Eldridge or Lips Page would be in some other club and it was all on the same street. You'd just keep wandering in wanting to hear it all and you couldn't. Your memory plays you tricks — and I'm aware of that — but I remember one particular night hearing Bird and it was really something to hear him, you know. And having come out of the club after listening to this all night until what with the beer and so on we were in this rosy world of New York and the jazz world and it seemed as if it would go on forever. Then taking a cab back to the boat, just before it sailed about five in the morning and going to sleep and then waking up and you're in another watery world and the boat is turning over and over. Those were the kinds of contrasts which really happened. But the irony of it was that we all thought 'it will keep going on and it will get better and better'.

*What was your impression — that a lot of people, besides musicians, were enjoying jazz then?*

OH NO. It wasn't all New York. You realised that it was an esoteric crowd but a big enough crowd that all these clubs could flourish, and although there was the hustling, it didn't seem to be the same kind of hustling it was later on. Then they'd grown to become a tourist trap hustle which goes on in clubs all over the world now, it becomes the thing. It wasn't so much then — as you were from another country it was a novelty. It wasn't the expected thing. One didn't expect that a sizeable part of the club's takings would be from the tourist trade. It was more like a club managing to run on jazz and if somebody came from England to listen to it — that was great. It was more like a local thing there in New York. You didn't get the feeling that it was big business like it became later on.



*Did you ever play in the New York clubs then or were you just digging what was happening?*

SOMETIMES I played. I sat in a few times. One thing that really knocked me out was an occasion

after I began studying with Lennie. The way it happened was Lennie was working in the Orchid Room with Lee, Warne, Jeff Morton and Arnold Fishkind. Anyway we came in off one trip and heard the group and that moved me more than anything. There was something about it as though I'd been drawn to this without knowing. The earlier records of Lennie's — the trio records — I hadn't appreciated that much but to hear this sound with the two saxes...it was really something. This points to the fact that I was still oriented to sound rather than the content of a line. So what drew me to that music was not so much the validity of their line but more this marvellous sound — with Billy Bauer on guitar and the two horns, the way it all blended in, that was what drew me to it in the beginning. It was only later that I began to appreciate more the musical subtleties of it. So Ronnie was talking to Lennie and he said 'do you teach' and Lennie said 'yes I do' and he explained how he had this place in Flushing and that he was hoping to get a studio and form a regular school where they could hold their own sessions, teach and so forth. The outcome was that we arranged to start taking lessons and this meant at the end of every trip I'd get the bass off the boat and we'd go up to Long Island Railroad and out to Flushing and take a lesson and of course this was one of the highlights of the trip.

One time, after I'd taken I suppose half a dozen lessons, Lennie was working in Birdland and after he'd given me a lesson he said 'what are you doing tonight?' And I said I would be going down to Birdland and he said 'can you be there by 9 o'clock?' And I said 'sure'. And then he said 'would you like to play a set with us?' Of course I was in seventh heaven and I got up there and played this set and I can remember I was very talkative in those days. And I can still see Lee's and Warne's quizzical looks as I was talking away there, what with my accent and everything else! But that was really something I enjoyed. How well I played or fitted in with it I don't know. I have no objectivity about it. I just know it was a highspot.

*So you continued with the lessons. How many — two or three a month?*

TWO A month. Then the problem on the boat was finding places to practice. We used all kinds

of cubbyholes and I remember one particular gruesome place which was on F Deck which was about as low as you could go and the propeller shaft came right up through the practice room, this big fat tube about a foot wide. The boat curved around, it was right at the back and I think all boats vibrate and the Queen Mary was no exception. To attempt to play a bass and try to get anything like a sound in these circumstances was like trying to play amplified bass in the loudest pop band you've ever heard. If I stuck my ear right close to the fingerboard, to the point that I'd got my hair caught in the strings, I could just about hear what I was doing. That was the scene. There was a tenor player called Gray Allard who was studying with Warne, Ronnie and I were

studying with Lennie, Bruce Turner studied with Lee and quite a few others, like an alto player called Dougie Fordyce, who was also studying with Lennie for quite a while. I suppose there were half a dozen of us taking lessons at one point. Bill LeSage also took some lessons.

*You obviously found these lessons extremely helpful?*

WELL, IT WAS the start of a new awareness, I realised for the first time that to be a thorough musician, one had to do the simple things really thoroughly and Lennie started us all off on scales. What I learned from doing scales, slowly and with feeling, has been a mainstay of my playing. When I hear a lot of what happens today I am depressed. On any instrument there are certain things one can learn to do that sound superficially very clever and inspired. It was like 20 years ago, if somebody played the *Warsaw Concerto* on the piano they sounded like a virtuoso. And in jazz today there is a tremendous amount of this sort of fake virtuosity. One of the things I'm sad about is that not more musicians and jazz listeners realise when there is real virtuosity and real musicianship. Not enough of them can distinguish. Its comparatively easy to go up and down an instrument and sound like you've got complete mastery but its something else to develop a musical line and let it take you, and have the facility, to have the musicality to follow it through and not lose it. Because what often happens with the jazz musician is that he gets an idea and its beautiful but it gets out of hand, he can't hold it. His musicality or technique is not enough and he has to let it go. But being able to follow your ideas through — that's what jazz is really about. And its not this flamboyance that passes for it. Sure it entertains the tourists. They come into a jazz club, the audience which consists of guys who in their day job are frustrated, they're not happy, they bring their girl, they've got to try to prove to their girls that they're men and if somebody's up there really saying something it makes them feel worse. They don't want to hear that. But if they can hear somebody going through the motions and putting on a big acting scene, deep down underneath they know its not real. And they can say to themselves 'I could do as well as that'. And it sort of compensates for the dreadful lack they have as human beings because of the situation we all have to face today. It gets right back to the cultural time we live in. Unfortunately in our machine age of plenty there's hardly any real work anymore. Only a handful of people have any kind of work that is meaningful in a living way.

*And it looks like there'll be less and less of it....*

THE WAY things are going, yes. So anyway, all this wasn't apparent to me in the old days. I'm

sure there were people around who could see it happening, by comparing what they had known before. In those times in New York, it was still the big boom of the post-war period, boom in a spiritual as well as material sense. This country hadn't reached that yet but in America it had. Just little things pointed to it.... in the clubs the audiences would remain until 4 a.m. and when you went out into the street there were lots of people around and all the big neon signs were going at 4 a.m. They didn't shut them down earlier because of any economic factors or whatever. Its funny but you begin to sense the pulse of a city through the years as it changes but at that time it was as though everybody was living some huge party.



*I suppose they were happy to be alive and released from the war?*

THAT WAS IT. And this period, for me, went from 1949 until early '51. Then I had no worries

about an income, I was doing alright moneywise, people wanted things here that we could bring back so we made a little money on the side, there was no thought of a rat race. I was young with no responsibilities or ties, taking lessons, enjoying them, loving the music and really feeling like life was grand. So then that job came to an end and when I realised this — in fact even before that — I'd made an application for a visa to go there to live. I thought I wanted to be in New York, primarily to study with Lennie. There was a romance too — that was part of it — and that helped to get me past any homesickness I might have felt. The motives aren't always clear when you decide to make a move — it's just something you do. And one of the things that got me past this guilt about not becoming a symphony musician was when I realised how dedicated — and I don't mean this in the corny way but in the true sense — Lennie Tristano was and how his creative ability really transcended anything else I'd ever heard, then I realised that here was music that was on a par with classical music. And I began to lose that compulsive feeling that I should become at least a good classical musician and go through that symphony orchestra apprenticeship. I began to realise that what I was learning in jazz was something of a frontier. There were no rules — one had to find them — cosmic rules about improvisation that one just had to learn and find out for oneself.

It's surprising how much other motives do come into music. When one works a commercial gig, in a club or at a dance or in a restaurant, the musicians pace their music without thinking about it. They play a bossa or whatever and go through a routine but what I didn't realise was just how much of this is conditioned not by the musician's feelings but by his fear of being out of a livelihood. The way this affected me was that on the Queen Mary we played quite a bit of jazz, simply because the people who ran the boat weren't hip enough to know it wasn't commercial. So we could get away with a lot — but that very phrase 'get away with it' — expresses a certain guilt feeling about jazz. When I went to New York and started to play at the sessions Lennie organised in his loft on East 32nd Street, we could blow all night. And we did — every Wednesday and every Saturday we would have sessions which would go on until the early hours of the morning. One time we played from nine o'clock at night until 10 o'clock the next morning and that's how much energy we all had. We just played and played. I remember when I first started to come to these sessions and I would play a few tunes and really enjoy it. Then I'd suddenly get uneasy and I couldn't make this out. And then finally the thought came to me — I felt it was time for a waltz! I realised then that this is the effect commercial music has on you. Even though I knew consciously that we were playing for the sake of the music itself, the guilt remained from the earlier experience.

*It was too good to be true? What were you doing at this time — did you have a day job?*

AT FIRST I couldn't get a union card so I took a job with the British Government Information

Services and worked there for a time. I roped in Lee on this — he needed a gig — and we were both working in the mail room together, singing tunes and acting up. Then when I didn't want to make that anymore I got another job, but between times various jobs came

up and I took whatever vacation was due me and worked with different bands. This went on for about a year, and a half and for the rest of 1951 and most of 1952. But I was doing a fair amount of work here and there — just odd nights — but I still kept a day job. Finally when Lee took this band on the road — with Jeff Morton, Ronnie Ball and myself — then I quit the day job scene for a while. I'd always fall back on it on occasion. I was very idealistic. I wouldn't take anything that I didn't feel musically was where I wanted to be. So I turned down a lot of work which professionally did me a lot of harm. I got the reputation of being very choosy which is not a good thing. In a way I don't regret it and in another way I think I may have been better off if I'd had some of this experience.

There was a time when the 'phone was always ringing and all the name bands wanted me. Within a period of two weeks I had offers to go with Brubeck, Woody Herman and Red Norvo, those are the ones I remember particularly. This came about through my appearances at Birdland and various places. You see this is another thing, a lot of the jazz musicians didn't know where it was either and that's still true today. There's still that flux of opinion as to who is playing and who isn't and the years sort it out. There are very few people now that would try to tell you that Bird wasn't a great musician but in those days not everybody dug Bird, not by any means. And even those that did had a certain amount of resentment about it. The opinion wasn't anything like you would think it should be when you look back on it.

I had this advantage that I had a classical training and most of the jazz bass players of that time appeared to be self-taught in terms of fingering. They didn't have that real precise fingering that has since developed. Ray Brown was an exception but a lot of them played more or less with their whole hand. What I didn't realise at the time was that a lot of those guys who played this way were really good musicians. They knew the notes, they got the flow of the thing and they could play a really nice bass line but because of their technical limitations, they couldn't take off and roar all over the bass. The training I had stood me in good stead and when I came to stretch out or play a fast tempo I didn't have to exert myself unduly. I could get around it fingerwise. So this got me a lot of attention which I think now was more than I deserved as a jazz musician. For a time I was accepted as a bit of a whizz-kid. A lot of the bass players used to come round and listen and the word went around, like it does when somebody new arrives on the scene. I spoiled that for myself but again I don't think I would do any differently. I just wanted to stay in New York and study with Lennie and only play those gigs that really made it for me. Occasionally I would stretch out on something else but most of it I felt was not really in there.

You know so much of the music that's played is not always inspired. If you've got to do four or five sets a night, starting at 10 and working until 4 in the morning and you do that six nights a week, how inspired can you be? You can't do it all the time so guys get into more of a formula thing. And I think this even included Bird. I don't think Bird was *always* playing that great.

# The second part of Peter Ind's discussion of his musical career and philosophical outlook will appear in our March issue, along with a review of LPs issued on his Wave label.



# CLARENCE PROFIT / JOHNNY SIMMEN

**T**HE CASE OF Clarence Profit is just another example — even though an extreme one — of the fact that there are artists who, while revered by fellow musicians, are notably neglected by most writers. Few of the latter seem to have the slightest idea that Profit was considered no less than a genius and important pace-setter by his contemporaries in the 'thirties, and especially during the final years preceding his premature death in 1944. Benny Carter and Teddy Wilson, to name just two famous artists, both declared that Profit's ideas and original chording were an inspiration to countless musicians. This statement alone, coming from two of the most 'chord-conscious' and undisputed masters of jazz, would suffice to prove the exceptional class of Profit. But even more to the point, in conversations with New York musicians — I have learnt at least as much from listening attentively to jazz men discussing music and musicians amongst themselves than from personally engaging in conversations myself — the name of Profit often comes up even today when the greatest piano players are mentioned.

It was Roger 'Ram' Ramirez who, in 1937, told me that he and Garnett Clark (both residing in Paris at that time) "often get together, each trying to sound as much like Clarence Profit as possible." And Ramirez added: "Garnett never heard Clarence in person but he is crazy over the things I heard Clarence do and which I play for Garnett."

This was the first time I had heard about Profit and there was such enthusiasm and admiration in Ram's voice that I made a mental note of the name, more particularly since all the praise came from Ram, a rather phlegmatic gentleman who does not normally show excitement except for the very few things that really impress him. I did not know then that I actually owned three sides (featuring Profit because Ramirez (erroneously) thought that Profit had never recorded. In 1937 the formidable pianist on the Washboard Serenaders' *Washboards get together* (1), *Kazoo moan* (2) and *Tappin' the time away* (3) — all recorded in March 1930 — was strictly unknown, as was the rest of the group (4).

In 1939, both Thomas 'Puss' Chase (a superb pianist who passed away of cancer in Washington D.C. on September 3, 1969) and Joe Turner kept whetting my appetite even more by comparing Profit to such giants as Willie 'The Lion' Smith and Art Tatum, Puss and Joe insisted that Profit was Tatum's and The Lion's equal where advanced chording was concerned. Incidentally, it is by now an established fact that in the early 'forties it was Profit with whom Tatum had his longest and most exciting 'cutting contests'. In 1952 Joe Turner declared: 'I like to mention the name of a pianist who, in my estimation, knew more chords on the piano than even our genius Tatum: Clarence Profit'. (*Coda*, Toronto, October/November 1965 issue).

*Washboards get together* and *Tappin' the time away* show Profit as an accomplished stride pianist who plays with tremendous drive, excellent tempo and beautiful full chords, and his energetic accompaniment is as inspired as are his fine solos. There cannot be any

doubt that he had carefully studied Fats Waller's playing and knew the latter's recordings of *Handful of keys* and *Valentine stomp* inside out. The fact that he is freely borrowing phrases from the two records should not be held against him, for after all it is the way that you do it that counts in jazz and this eighteen year old youngster could really convincingly reproduce what he had heard from his mentor. In *Kazoo moan*, a blues, Clarence Profit uses Earl Hines's solo from Louis Armstrong's *West end blues* as his 'point de depart', but he then develops his own personal expression as he goes on and achieves a beautifully constructed and technically, impeccably executed gem of improvisation. These are, incidentally, the only washboard records on which it is absolutely certain that Profit is the pianist. Today it has become fashionable amongst obscure personnel discoverers to throw his name in on half the sessions recorded by the Washboard Rhythm Kings/Boys Band etc., but I have taken an avid interest in these groups since the 'thirties and can assure readers that this is nonsense. Fine as some of the pianists present on these dates may be — especially Eddie Miles whose driving, busy playing is heard on many sessions — none can equal Profit's exceptional musical stature (nor do they play in his style) by any stretch of the imagination. I had the pleasure of listening to many of these records in the company of Puss Chase, Ram Ramirez and Joe Turner and except for the three abovementioned sides their verdict was always the same: Good pianist but not good enough for Clarence who was in a class by himself.

**I** AM UNABLE to comprehend why some people are inventing what amount to completely fictitious band personnels, presenting them as facts. It is not my business to fathom their reasons for doing so or to accept their explanations as presented, but I am certain that they are doing positive harm with such nonsense since there are too many readers who actually accept their guesses as fact, mainly because they cannot imagine that there are individuals who take pleasure in dreaming up personnels under the guise of making a contribution to jazz history! I am afraid that this type of person will always be with us, for they were already a nuisance some decades ago and today they, or others, still produce their dubious brainchilds by the dozen. The story of the washboard group personnels is probably the most ridiculous example of this nature: If one *listens* to the records with an attentive ear and some knowledge of jazz one has to admit that almost all these personnels are still as much shrouded in mystery today as they were in the early 'thirties. The worst offender in this field is undoubtedly one Gerd Behrens who writes catastrophic liner notes for German R.C.A.: Frank Driggs's piece in *Record Research* and Theo Zwicky's various articles in *Storyville* were steps in the right direction, but both Frank and Theo placed too much emphasis on Ben Smith's recollections. These — as attentive listening to the records in question prove — are often far from reliable.

As John Chilton points out, Profit was living in Antigua until late 1936. He resumed his (modest) recording career in February 1939: Of the six titles made at that session only two — *There'll be some*



**Profit, Clarence:** Born New York City 26/6/1912. Died New York City 22/10/1944. Son of Herman Profit, a professional pianist. Cousin of pianist Sinclair Mills. Clarence played piano from age of 3, broadcasting while still at school. At 18 led own ten-piece band at various New York venues, including "Renaissance" and "The Alhambra". Worked regularly with Teddy Bunn in Washboard Serenaders Quartet during 1930/31. Then (circa 1932) went to Antigua to visit his grandparents, stayed there for several years, leading own band and broadcasting regularly. Also worked at St. Kitts and in Bermuda. Returned to New York in November 1936, forming own trio which enjoyed long residencies at various clubs: "George's Tavern" (1937-39), "Yeah Man Club" and "Cafe Society" (1939), "Village Vanguard" (1940) and "Kelly's Stable" (1940-43). The trio also played a residency at "Ritz Carlton", Boston, 1938. Clarence Profit is part-composer (with Edgar Sampson) of *Lullaby in rhythm*. (From *Who's Who Of Jazz – Storyville to Swing Street* by John Chilton, to be published shortly. Reproduced by kind permission of the author.)

*changes made* and *Tea for two* were issued at the time (on American Brunswick.) They are true masterpieces, with unique chordal progressions, and to this day I have never heard a *Tea for two* that has that particular harmonic climate. Two other titles from the same session, *Don't leave me* and *I got rhythm* were released over two decades later in the "Swing Street" album (Epic (A) SN-6042, Columbia (E) 33SK 1506). The many similarities in the arrangements of *I got rhythm* as recorded by the trios of Art Tatum and Clarence Profit has puzzled me for years. Joe Turner's explanation is an interesting one, for he says that the most typical ideas heard on both records are in reality Ram Ramirez's creation – Ramirez headed a trio (including Jimmy Shirley) *before* Profit and Tatum had theirs. *I got rhythm*, arranged by Ram, was the trio's most popular number among musicians, and according to Joe, both Tatum and Profit used some of these riffs! When I mentioned the story to Ram Ramirez in 1968 he just grinned and said that he couldn't imagine two such masters getting ideas from him. Then he philosophically concluded: "But so many funny things happen in life that one never knows, huh?"

**P**ROFIT PLAYS well on *I got rhythm* when guitarist Billy Moore (no relation to the Lunceford arranger/Peter Sisters pianist) doesn't get in the way. Moore is a good guitarist but obviously not fast enough for Profit who, almost like Tatum, is running the changes like a whirlwind, so that only a topnotch performer could keep up with him. However, the outstanding performance is *Don't leave me*. It is this kind of delicate playing – but without any loss of swing – which attracted so many musicians, intrigued and inspired a large number of pianists. "Profit had such an advanced knowledge of harmony", Skip Hall told Stanley Dance (*Jazz Monthly*).

In January 1940 Profit made his only solo recordings – *Body and soul* and *I didn't know what time it was*. They reconfirm his exceptional musicality and his fine touch, and are real classics of their kind. There is but one sour note – all the copies that I have heard are affected by considerable wow, especially disagreeable during the out-of-tempo passages at slow tempo. Incidentally, *Don't leave me* is also (slightly) spoilt by this fault. In view of the fact that Profit made so few records and that his subtle musicality calls for careful recording, the shortcoming in question is doubly regrettable. In September 1940 the great artist made his last known records – *Dark eyes*, *Azure*, *Times Square blues* and *Hot and bothered* (American Decca). While the first two are good performances, *Times Square blues* and Duke's *Hot and bothered* (one of Ellington's many fantastic adaptations and extensions of *Tiger rag*) are some-

thing else, being extraordinary in every respect. The dependable Ben Brown is still on bass but Billy Moore has given way to Arthur 'Jimmy' Shirley, who is as ideal a partner for Profit as Tiny Grimes was for Tatum. *Times Square blues* finds all these musicians in complete empathy and from the second chorus on they keep building to a tremendous climax by playing with a truly phenomenal swing. *Hot and bothered* is just as great – the arrangement is very original and the solos by Profit and Shirley full of inspired ideas executed with considerable zest. It is interesting to note that while the pianist is constantly sticking to *Hot and bothered*, using Duke's conception as his base for improvising, Shirley, on the other hand, just plays on the chords of *Tiger rag*, forgetting all about *Hot and bothered*, when he's soloing. It is worth stressing again that Profit's touch is one of the most thrilling that I have ever heard from a pianist, being positively firm and pianistic at the same time. Some jazz fans – not knowing his best records – think of Clarence Profit as a harmonically interesting but somewhat sophisticated pianist. The truth is that Profit had all the assets which make a jazz musician outstanding – in fact, Clarence Profit was a *complete* jazz artist.

In closing I quote Teddy Wilson, who is, of course, particularly qualified to express his opinion of Clarence Profit. Early in 1969 Teddy remarked: "Clarence was a great pianist and we all listened to him with awe. He was, what I call, an *original* pianist – and you know how sparingly I use that word. However, because of his timidity and exclusive love for music – that man was all wrapped up in jazz outside of which few, if any, other things seemed to interest him – he never thought of promoting himself to any extent. That's why so many people haven't even heard of him. He passed away when he was only 32 years old. Clarence's health had never been good and his fanatical love for playing made him keep such long hours that he never caught up with his sleep. As a consequence his health was dwindling fast. He died from 'the dropsey' and the world lost an outstanding and, I repeat, original artist who, in my estimation, could be the equal of any pianist I ever heard with the exception of Art Tatum (the master), Fats Waller and Earl Hines. And I heard many great pianists, believe me..."

## NOTES

- (1) Available on RCA(G) LPM 10 018
- (2) Available on RCA(G) LPM 10 018 and RCA(F) 430.700
- (3) Available on RCA(F) 403.700
- (4) The trumpet player heard on *Tappin' the time away* is, of course, *not* Henry Allen. It is an insult to Red's memory to credit him with such thin-toned, unimaginative and unprofessional trumpet work.

It is reasonable to assume that Clarence Profit can also be heard on *Teddy's blues* by the Washboard Serenaders, recorded on the same date as *Tappin' the time away*. I have never succeeded in hearing this record, however.



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## REACTIONARY REFLECTIONS

**I**T'S DIFFICULT to repress the faint twinge of hope which insists on arising when one hears that members of the audience at a concert of contemporary jazz actually got up and walked out during the performance. The point is, people like me, who've never been very enthusiastic — to put it mildly — about the New Thing, would never be within miles of such a concert anyway, so our lack of enthusiasm doesn't register. But these were jazz concert-goers — people who are still actually going outside in the cold and wet to pay good money to listen to live jazz, and they were sufficiently disturbed by what they heard to make the ultimate form of negative protest (throwing fruit, while possibly more effective, I would regard as positive). I don't know what these people expected to hear when they attended a concert by Graham Collier. Perhaps they had simply read the good reports that have been appearing in the jazz press from time to time and thought that his music might be worth hearing. Evidently, however, what they did hear was so far removed from what they expected — or wanted — that they *just couldn't stand to listen to it*.

This, I think, is quite significant. I've attended plenty of jazz events that were somewhat less than first-rate, and one or two that were pretty poor, but I've never walked out in the middle of a concert — even Vic Lewis at his most commercial (cf. Jim Burns and his reminiscences of modern jazz concerts in the early 'fifties). When one considers how patient and docile the average British concertgoer is, it's not hard to imagine how sorely tried they must have felt on this occasion.

I heard the broadcast by Collier on the Ronnie Scott television programme recently, and found it rather bad. Not unspeakably so, but pretty awful. It seemed to me a dull, tuneless, spiritless kind of music, with little or no real connection with the kind of jazz I used to enjoy as recently as five years ago. The musicians seemed to be out of tune with one another (I didn't doubt that this was intentional, but knowing this didn't make it sound any better), the soloists' ability to create a coherent and creative (even uncreative) melodic line seemed negligible, and the whole programme seemed to be an elaborate demonstration of how jazz is not supposed to sound.

Bad as the Collier broadcast was, however, it did little to prepare me for the John Surman quartet programme which followed it a couple of weeks later. Surman has been widely heralded as the greatest jazz soloist this country has produced, or, in the words of some enthusiasts, the first of 'world class' (i.e. as good as the Americans). In a sense, this may be true, but after twenty-five years of listening to jazz of all kinds, I found what Surman played the other week so incomprehensible and unpleasant that I did the equivalent of what the people at the Collier concert did when they walked out in disgust — I switched off.

A few years ago, some critics used to make rather heavy weather out of the large stylistic differences between bebop and Dixieland (using these terms as all-embracingly as possible) and the two



styles were generally regarded as being poles apart. So unlike one another, in fact, that it was an event to be accompanied by critical apologies — or outrage — if a musician from one style sat in with a group playing the other. Nevertheless, it *was* possible for for boppers and Dixielanders to play together, even if the results didn't please the followers of either school. Records by mixed groups were made, and if they weren't always artistically viable, at least they made the requisite minimum of musical sense.

**B**UT WERE THE New Thing musicians (I take it that what Surman plays *is* New Thing, although if it isn't it hardly matters) to play this way with a conventional jazz group, their presence would simply destroy the entire musical concept of the venture. Despite the fact that the little 'tunes' which commenced the two Surman numbers I suffered through were quite simple and trite (although played in an excruciatingly un-musical manner), the remainder of the performances seemed to follow no particular chord sequence and to be in no particular key. When music is cast adrift like this, it bears no meaningful relationship to anything. It becomes mere sound, and even a kind of sound which still retains vestiges of tonality, so that one is left with a *kind* of music (a horrible, ugly music, which is to *real* music as fruit which has gone rotten is to fresh), is useless as a means of communicating the incredibly subtle messages of real music. This is why 'serious' music over the past half century has lost its audience. In abandoning tonality it has abandoned meaning, and without meaning it is useless. The fact that the 'meaning' of music cannot be verbalised doesn't mean that music doesn't have any meaning, but part of that meaning stems from the associations and psychological reverberations that have been built up in man for several centuries of tonality. Without tonality, music cannot function properly, and while sound can, of course, be interesting on its own account (as in the case of people who buy records of motor car noises), as can a book written in some nonsensical language, it cannot communicate meaningfully as music to an audience which has already absorbed a lifetime of genuine musical experience.

Listening to the John Surman quartet go through its paces in that TV programme, I felt like someone in a nightmare world where all values have suddenly been twisted into their opposites. A world where pain is supposed to give pleasure, where ugliness is thought to be beautiful, and where something joyful that we used to call music has been thrown away and its place usurped by hysterical, screaming, rant.

As I've said, music cannot be verbalized, and what it is capable of achieving cannot be expressed in language, no matter how poetic or profound. But sometimes, a message comes across *with* the music. Not *in* it, but alongside it. When Charlie Parker played *Embraceable you* there was an unspoken but real statement of intent which we used to take so much for granted that we scarcely gave it a thought. In a way, Parker seemed to be saying, 'Here's a tune — we all know it, it's a standard. I'm going to play it, but

I'm going to make a few changes. I'll depart from the melody — I may even change the chords a bit, but if you listen carefully, maybe you'll like what I do with it. Not only that, but I'm going to try and surprise myself too, because I don't really know ahead of time exactly what's going to happen. Okay, let's go, and we'll see how it turns out'.

**N**OW I'M NOT trying to say that Parker (or any other conventional jazz musician, it doesn't matter who) actually thought these things — or even that *we* thought them. But we took their sentiment for granted, and when we heard what Parker did, we listened on terms which could very well have arisen from such a message. And a similar kind of thing could be said of most other forms of music. But one of the things which disturbs me about Surman's kind of jazz is that I cannot imagine what the accompanying message could be. Or, what is worse, if I could, it might make me want to run and hide. It seems that Surman's offering is so palpably horrible that he really must hate his audience, and want them to suffer as much as possible. The jazzmen of the past offered us a variety of things. Music which was beautiful, music which was exciting, music which made us sad, music which made us want to dance. Sometimes they even bored or irritated us. But they didn't intend to. They wanted us to like what they had to offer. I cannot for the life of me see that Surman's intentions are consistent with those of the earlier jazzmen. He throws ugliness in our faces, and fills our ears with noise (who was it who defined noise as 'a stench in the ear'? An apt description!) Do people actually enjoy what he does? I find it difficult to believe. They may say they do. They may even think that they do. But I wonder. The audience sitting quietly in Scott's listening to Surman reminds me of those people who shuffle round rubbish-filled art galleries like so many sheep; passive, frightened, and unsure of themselves when confronted with something labelled 'Art' which they don't 'understand' and don't know what to make of. Critics who have pinned their reputations on the avant-garde in jazz have often accused those who didn't like it of not wanting to understand what the new jazzmen were doing. They have said, 'You must get rid of your pre-conceptions.' To them I say: my pre-conceptions were formed with the expert assistance of, among others, Duke Ellington, Lester Young, and Charlie Parker, and they are not to be discarded lightly — even if this were possible. If jazz as we have known it for some fifty years is to survive — and at this moment in time there seems to be some doubt — then the stupidity which has gripped 'serious' music for half a century must not be allowed to spread. Jazz needs an audience — a demanding, clear-headed, no-nonsense audience which will ignore the phony intellectuals and reject what it instinctively dislikes. This is why I was so cheered when I heard about those walkers-out at Liverpool. If the jazz audience can maintain its independence of judgment in the face of the prevailing insanity, the music may yet survive.



# RECORD REVIEW

## BALL AND CHAIN

**BIG MAMA THORNTON** (vcl); Everett Minor (sax); Nat Dove (p); B. Houston (g); Curtis Tillman (bs); Gus Wright (d)  
Berkeley, Calif. — c. 1967

*Ball and Chain* :: *Wade in the water*

**LARRY WILLIAMS** (vcl, g); unknown org; bs; d  
probably Houston, Texas — c. 1967

*So much trouble* :: *That's my girl* :: *I know you hear me calling*  
**LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS** (vcl, g); Harold "Frenchy" Joseph (d)  
Houston, Texas — early 1965

*Come on, baby* :: *Money taker* :: *Mama's fight* :: *My woman*  
:: *Gabriel*

### Arhoolie 1039 (52/6d)

THREE TEXAS blues singers, currently active, who represent impressively the importance of the southwest in the shaping of modern blues. Sam Hopkins puts in typical performances, using phrases on the guitar which one has heard many times before but with the timing and unexpected slight twists which make his playing continually fascinating in spite of its familiarity. On these tracks he is accompanied by Frenchy Joseph, who died soon after the recordings were made. Playing a heavy, socking kind of beat which displayed his zodico origins, he provided the sort of accompaniment which Hopkins particularly favours — most often in the playing of Spider Kilpatrick. Though *Come on baby* is the standard fast routine which he uses to warm up a crowd, *Gabriel* is a novel blues on the "Little Boy Blue" theme, while *My woman* has flashes of phrasing in lyrics and guitar which display his personal inventiveness. Larry Williams is a guitarist of a younger generation — he's barely thirty years old. He has the command of the instrument which is shared by many younger musicians and his fast fingering trails off in ripples of sound at the ends of his sung lines. Vocally he has a strong delivery with heavy gospel influence on *So much trouble* or *Calling*. A decade separates Williams and John Littlejohn and the difference is remarkable. Big Mama Thornton's *Ball and chain* was the theme of a Janis Joplin hit number. Sung by the originator it is a full-blooded, extremely dramatic blues. *Wade* on the other hand is the gospel song given a secular emphasis, demonstrating again the convergence of these song styles. Big Mama improves with each recording — a female singer of real stature.

PAUL OLIVER

## ART BLAKEY

THE WITCH DOCTOR:

Lee Morgan (tpt); Wayne Shorter (ten); Bobby Timmons (p); Jymie Merritt (bs); Art Blakey (d)

New York City — March 14, 1961

*The witch doctor* :: *Afrique* :: *Those who sit and wait* :: *A little busy* :: *Joelle* :: *Lost and found*

### Blue Note BST 84258 (43/9d.)

JUST ABOUT ANY record by Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers is worth listening to. Of course, the group has had its ups and downs over the years, which is inevitable when so much depends on the quality of the front line soloists and their basic material. Blakey can drum as brilliantly as ever, but if the tenorman or trumpeter doesn't get off the ground then it's going to show. This date was at least blessed with the presence of Lee Morgan. He plays well on every track, dancing and darting over the rhythm, never afraid to hit high notes or try for a new effect. He's perhaps not the most inspired of trumpeters, from the point of view of shaping a solo, but he's certainly exciting. I'm afraid I have a blind spot in so far as Wayne Shorter is concerned. His tone seems ugly and his ideas hackneyed. Still, he works hard enough here and partners Morgan competently in the unison passages. Blakey is not quite as good as I have heard him, but

nevertheless better than most drummers, and it's a pleasure to listen to his active (but not over-busy) backing to the soloists. Not a brilliant record, but those willing to put up with the obvious limitations of the quintet format should find enough of interest to satisfy them. The total playing time is just under 35 minutes.

JIM BURNS

## MARION BROWN

MARION BROWN QUARTET:

Alan Shorter (tpt-1); Marion Brown (alt); Bennie Maupin (ten-2); Ronnie Boykins, Reggie Johnson (bs); Rashied Ali (d)  
New York City — November, 1965

*Capricorn moon-1*

same date

omit Boykins

*27 Cooper Square-1* :: *Exhibition-2*

### Fontana SFJL930 (28/7d.)

THOUGH BROWN has looked to major figures for guidance, he nevertheless establishes his own individual aura in these performances. His reedy tone, unforced lyrical manner, and ready fund of ideas combine neatly in this opening item to create a favourable impression, and whilst his eight-minute solo might be adjudged overlong, the attractiveness of the basic melody, to which he constantly alludes, mitigates that drawback. *27 Cooper Square*, a much shorter and altogether brisker rendition, finds him adopting a different approach, deploying terse, jabbing phrases, at first against the shifting bass/drum tapestry and then over percussion alone. Despite the extra urgency, however, a similar impression of airiness prevails, and the clarity of the four-part improvisation preceding the closing statement is really quite remarkable. *Exhibition* has another long alto solo, this time with a greater use of tonal variation; in the main, motivic continuity is agreeably strong. Ali and Johnson, in solo and ensemble alike, achieve a fine standard here: Shorter and Maupin are less effective, but in any case have only subsidiary roles. Playing time of this reissue, first released as ESP 1022 and reviewed in our April 1968 number, is 45 minutes.

MICHAEL JAMES

## DONALD BYRD

FANCY FREE:

Donald Byrd (tpt); Julian Priester (tmb); Frank Foster (ten); Lew Tabackin (fl); Duke Pearson (el.p); Jimmy Ponder (g); Roland Wilson (bs); Joe Chambers (d); Nat Bettis, John Robinson (percussion)

New York City — May 9, 1969

*I love the girl* :: *Weasil*

Jerry Dodgion (fl); Leo Morris (d); replace Tabackin and Chambers  
New York City — June 6, 1969

*Fancy free* :: *The uptowners*

### Blue Note BST 84319 (43/9d.)

AS I SEEM to recall saying before somewhere, it's amazing how much difference a little bit of forethought makes. Donald Byrd — and presumably Duke Pearson who, besides playing electric piano, produced this session — seems to have chosen the musicians for the date with care. Also, the tunes are better than average.

The title track, *Fancy free*, moves beautifully over a bubbling rhythm section, and both Byrd and Frank Foster turn in fine solos. I have to admit that I looked doubtfully at this disc when I first received it, because I have memories of the rather fussy, thin-toned Byrd trumpet style of the late-1950s, but his work here delighted me. It's so pure-toned and lyrical that it's a joy to listen to. The same attributes are also obvious on the pretty ballad, *I love the girl*; both Byrd and Foster sustain the elegant mood of this tune. I'm dubious of the qualities of the electric piano but it's clear that, like any other instrument, it all really depends on the man handling it. Duke Pearson produces quite an attractive sound and certainly doesn't ever become intrusive in the ensemble passages. Even his solos have charm and are played with what Nat Hentoff so aptly describes as a "silvery yet pungent" sound. Recommended to anyone interested in hearing how imaginative musicians can blend rock-jazz rhythms with good tunes and come up with some inspired playing. *Fancy Free* (the LP, not just the title track) lasts for nearly 40 minutes and I thoroughly enjoyed it all.

JIM BURNS



## BLANCHE CALLOWAY/DAVE NELSON

### BLANCHE CALLOWAY AND HER JOY BOYS:

Joe Keyes or Harry Lawson, Clarence Smith, Edgar Battle (tpt); Alton Moore or Floyd Brady (tbn); John Harrington (clt, alt); John Williams (alt); Lawrence Freeman (ten); Andy Kirk (bs-sx); Mary Lou Williams (p); Bill Dirvin (bj); Ben Thigpen (d); Blanche Calloway-1; Billy Massey-2, Clarence Smith-3 (vcl)

Camden, N.J. — March 2, 1931

BRC 64068-1 *Casey Jones-2,4*

BRC 64070-2 *I need lovin'-1*

-4 unknown male vocalist in addition to Massey heard on this track

Camden, N.J. — March 27, 1931

BRC 68938-2 *Just a crazy song-1,4*

BRC 68940-1 *Sugar blues-3\**

BRC 68941-1 *I'm getting myself ready for you-1*

-4 band vocal responses on this track

Joe Keyes, Edgar Battle, Clarence Smith (tpt); Alton Moore (tbn); Booker Pittman, Leroy Harding (alt, clt); Ben Webster (ten); Clyde Hart (p); Andy Jackson (bj, g); Joe Durham (brass bs); William 'Cozy' Cole (d); Blanche Calloway (vcl-1)

Camden, N.J. — May 8, 1931

BRC 69026-2 *It's right here for you-1*

Henry Mason (tpt); Ernest Purce (alt); Charles Frazier (ten); replace Keyes, Pittman and Webster; unknown tbn added

Camden, N.J. — November 18, 1931

BRC 69786-1 *I got what it takes-1*

BRC 69787-1 *Growlin' Dan-1*

### DAVE NELSON AND THE KING'S MEN:

Dave Nelson (tpt, vcl-1); Melvin Herbert (tpt); Wilbur de Paris (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Glyn Paque, Jack Bradley (alt, clt); Charles Frazier (ten); Wayman Carver (ten, fl); Sam Allen (p); Arthur Taylor (g); Simon Marrero (bs); Gerald Hobson (d)

New York City — January 14, 1931

BVE 64849-2 *I ain't got nobody-1*

BVE 64850-2 *When day is done-1*

BVE 64851-2 *Some of these days-1*

### DAVE NELSON'S HARLEM HOT SHOTS:

As last but Clarence Berton (tbn); Danny Barker (bj); replace de Paris and Taylor; Harry Brown (tpt); added; one reed (probably Bailey) omitted

New York City — June 9, 1931

ABRC 69905-2 *Somebody stole my gal-1*

ABRC 69906-1 *Rockin' chair-1*

ABRC 69907-2 *Loveless love-1*

ABRC 69908-2 *St. Louis blues-1*

RCA(G) Ⓜ LMP 10124 (48/6d.)

Note: An asterisk denotes a previously unissued take.

FIVE OF THE Calloway tracks have backings by

the Andy Kirk band, the short ensemble passages

on *I need* and *Just a crazy* giving hints as to how well the group could play. Unfortunately *Casey* and *Sugar* are strictly vaudeville performances with hokum clarinet and Clyde McCoy-styled trumpet featured respectively, and the vocals on the remaining three titles are unimpressive. Despite this there are some good solos — Mary Lou Williams on *I need* (strongly Hines influences), the two trumpeters on *Just*, and Mary Lou again and a growl trumpeter on *I'm gettin'*, *It's right here* has a pleasant Calloway vocal plus nice muted trumpet and a good passage by Hart who, along with four others, had been enticed from Jap Allen's band by Edgar Battle. *I got* is mostly vocal, though the ensemble sound is good, as is *Growlin'* on which Blanche sings in the manner of her brother who was just about making the bigtime.

It is unfortunate that Nelson chose to sing on every one of his tracks, for his abilities in this role are limited. The first session is worth hearing for the fine playing of Buster Bailey, notably on *Some of these days* where he is strongly featured, other solos being competent rather than inspired. Despite Nelson's association with Oliver it is interesting that his solo on *Some* is based on Armstrong's, though on the later *Somebody* and *St. Louis* his solos do show Oliver's influence. The best soloist on this date is the little known trombonist Berton, though there are pleasant contributions from alto and clarinet. The latter is certainly not Bailey — probably Paque — and published personnels to the contrary I am sure that

he is not present on the June session while Carver, heard only on *Loveless*, is absent from the January session.

This is a very interesting LP for big band collectors, many of the titles being extremely rare, but is a strictly specialist issue. Recording quality is good, playing time 47 minutes. ALBERT MCCARTHY

## CLIFTON CHENIER

### BLACK SNAKE BLUES:

Clifton Chenier (vcl, acc); Felix James Benoit (g); Joe Morris (bs); Cleveland Chenier (wbd); Robert St. Judy (d)

Berkeley, Calif — October 10, 1967

*Black Snake Blues :: Let's talk it over :: Walking to Louisiana :: Things ain't what they used to be; :: Wrap it up :: Monifique :: Johnny can't dance :: I lost my baby :: Can't go home no more :: I got a little girl*

Arhoolie 1038 (52/6d.)

THIS IS the third lp that Clifton Chenier has made for Arhoolie and serves to emphasise the breadth of his repertoire in this rather singular field of blues zydeco. Other zydeco (or "zodico", as it now most frequently spelled) artists tend to be monotonous but Chenier has an inexhaustible fund of songs spanning a range that takes in blues of traditional kind at one end, and popular songs translated into his idiom, at the other. It is in the nature of this music that it does tend to be monotonous all the same, played by even the best of its musicians. There is a plodding beat, a certain whinnying, buzzing persistence in the accordion itself, and a standard calling kind of vocal which is essential to its character. This can be irritating after a time on record, although in live performance it contributes to the hypnotic appeal of the music. Chenier avoids this to some extent, or at least pushes the idiom to its outer limits, by varying tempi, by the use of guitar solos — as on *I got a little girl* — and by adapting other kinds of song to his style. *Walking to Louisiana* is Fats Domino inspired, as its title indicates, *Johnny can't dance* is a cajun hop, *Black snake blues* is the Blind Lemon item transformed, and *I lost my baby* is a very lowdown blues, sung entirely in French patois. When all this is said it must be admitted that Clifton doesn't entirely escape the fetters of the music's limitations. This isn't the best of his lp's and his brother Cleveland's washboard playing lacks rhythmic variety. For a first dip try "Bon Ton Roulet" on Arhoolie 1031. PAUL OLIVER

## BILL COLEMAN

### THREE GENERATION JAM / BILL COLEMAN + FOUR:

Bill Coleman (tpt); Francois Guin (tbn); Michael Garrett (p); Jean-Francois Catoire (bs); Art Taylor (d)

Paris — January 30 and 31, 1969

*Me and my girl :: Satin doll :: If I had you :: Rosetta :: I believe in miracles*

same dates

Coleman plays flugel-horn

*Don't blame me :: I ain't got nobody :: I'm in the mood for love*

omit Coleman, Guin

same dates

*How high the moon :: Stairway to the stars*

77 Records 77 SEU 12/34 (39/5d.)

A FEW YEARS ago I and other jazz writers with a particular taste for up-to-date mainstream used to annoy our more progressively or archaically inclined readers by listing musicians from the 'thirties who we thought ought to be recorded 'before it was too late'. Some were recorded and wholly justified our faith in them; others proved to be almost or completely played out; yet others gave a poor account of themselves because of uncongenial circumstances, lack of practice or failing health; many, despite our propaganda, remained unrecorded. Now the list is so short that one has not the heart to compile it, but at the head of my personal list of older musicians who still have some great jazz to play would come Benny Carter and Bill Coleman. Both have kept in practice, Carter with studio work in Los Angeles, Coleman with club work in his adopted home, Paris. Both have recorded tantalizing fragments during the 'fifties and 'sixties but neither seems to have been able to get his full talent



on to an L.P. Doug Dobell deserves great credit for his attempts to correct this melancholy situation even though the location, personnel and recording equipment have not always been ideal. (All three circumstances were poor, for example, when he 'caught' Pete Brown on 77 LA 12/8 in 1961 and recorded some of Brown's best playing in his post-bop style.) On the present session things were pretty good for Coleman: the recording equipment was good, Art Taylor and Catoire supplied an excellent foundation, Garrett's piano was interesting and a good young trombonist in the Urbie Green mould was present. *Me and my girl*, indeed, starts off splendidly, trombone and trumpet jamming together neatly, Coleman on his best mercurial form in his solo and setting Guin off on a good if rather unimaginative one. Garrett swings nicely for his first chorus but seems to have some difficulty with continuity in his second; nevertheless, it passes, and only in the final ensemble does one realise that this is a jam session, effectively unrehearsed. Though Coleman's lead is firm enough, Guin's part is so tentative that the chorus seems to fall apart. Well, that sort of thing happens in jam sessions, and it would be churlish to criticise this L.P. for sometimes sounding like a jam session when it makes no claim to being anything else. In many respects it is to its credit that, largely because of Coleman, Taylor and Catoire, one forgets it is mainly extempore. They know exactly what they are about, but Guin and Garrett, like many a competent musician before them, lapse now and again into cliché. Garrett, particularly, could have done with a couple of ré-plays because his solos show signs of considerable originality but (to me) lack structure. But this is meant to be Coleman's record, even though he and Guin are absent from two tracks, and he really plays very well — hear him on *Rosetta* and notice how well Taylor backs him and changes the beat to suit Guin. Coleman, like Buck Clayton, has lost none of his powers over the years, and if his dancing, quicksilver phrasing lacks a little of the glister it had in the 'forties, it has gained artistic coherence. A good record to be going on with, but I am still waiting for the really great jazz record Bill Coleman has in him.

JOHN POSTGATE

## STAN GETZ — ASTRUD GILBERTO

### GETZ AU GO-GO:

Stan Getz (ten); Gary Burton (vib). Gene Cherico (bs); Joe Hunt (d); Astrud Gilberto (vcl-1)

"Cafe Au Go-Go", New York City — August 19, 1964

*Six, nix, quix-flix :: Only trust your heart-1 :: The singing song*  
Chuck Israels replaces Cherico

same date

*Summertime :: One note samba-1 :: Here's that rainy day*  
add Kenny Burrell (g); Gene Cherico (bs) and Helcio Milito (d)

same date

replace Israels and Hunt

*Corcovado -1 :: It might as well be spring-1 :: Eu e voce-1 :: The telephone song-1*

Verve SVLP 9081 (37/5d.)

THIS IS THE stereo version of VLP 9081 which I reviewed here in May, 1965. Opportunity has been taken to alter *6-nix-pix-clix* to *Six, nix, quick-flix*, an alteration of singularly little moment since the piece consists of about 30 seconds musical background to Getz's farewell announcements. In my earlier review I was much taken by Mrs. Gilberto's dead-pan singing, rather unfavourable towards Getz's rumpty-tumpty phrasing and dead bored by the newcomer, Gary Burton. Today I see what I saw in La Gilberto's singing but I now know it well and accept it as a passing fad of no great interest to readers of this magazine. I had overlooked the fact that it was as much Getz's noodling behind her as the novelty of her voice which made the record. Today, also I feel broader minded about Getz: if he wants to play parts of *Summertime* like *Here we go round the mulberry bush*, why should I object? I remain satisfied that my earlier opinion of Burton was just; I note that stereo improves the atmosphere but does not bring Burrell any more to the fore — he might as well not be there. A pleasant enough oddity which those who

enjoy music on the pop fringe of jazz should certainly investigate. 39 minutes.

JOHN POSTGATE

## FLETCHER HENDERSON

### FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA 1927-1934:

Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Tommy Ladnier (tpt); Benny Morton, Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Don Redman (alt, clt); Coleman Hawkins (ten, clt); Fletcher Henderson (p); Charlie Dixon (bj); June Coles (tu); Kaiser Marshall (d)

Camden, N.J. — March 11, 1927

BVE 38160-1 *Shuffling Sadie\**

Camden, N.J. — April 27, 1927

BVE 38496-1 *St. Louis shuffle*

BVE 38497-1 *Variety stomp*

Russell Smith, Bobby Stark (tpt); Rex Stewart (cnt); Benny Morton, Claude Jones (tbn); Russell Procope (clt, alt); Harvey Boone (alt, clt); Coleman Hawkins (ten, clt); Fletcher Henderson (p); Ikey Robinson (g); John Kirby (bs); Walter Johnson (d); unknown male vocalist-1

Chicago — April 25, 1931

BRC 53067-2 *Roll on Mississippi, roll on-1*

BRC 53068-2 *Moan you moaners-1\**

BRC 53069-1 *Singin' the blues*

J.C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams (tbn); Edgar Sampson (alt, vln) replace Morton, Jones and Boone; Dick Robertson (vcl-1)

New York City — July 31, 1931

BRC 70140-1 *Oh! it looks like rain-1*

BRC 70142-1 *My sweet tooth says "I wanna"-1*

BRC 70143-1 *Malinda's wedding day-1*

Benny Morton (tbn) replaces Williams; Kirby plays both string and brass bass; Ikey Robinson-1, Harlan Lattimore-2 (vcl)

New York City — March 10, 1932

BSHQ 71938-2 *Strangers\**

BSHQ 71939-1 *Take me away from the river-1*

BSHQ 71942-1 *I wanna count sheep-2*

Russell Smith, Joe Thomas, Henry Allen (tpt); Claude Jones, Keg Johnson (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Russell Procope (clt, alt); Hilton Jefferson (alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten); Fletcher Henderson (p); Bernard Addison (g); John Kirby (bs); Vic Engle (d); Charles Holland (vcl-1)

New York City — March 6, 1934

BS 81787-1 *Hocus pocus*

BS 81788-2 *Phantom fantasie*

BS 81789-2 *Harlem madness-1*

BS 81790-1 *Tidal wave*

RCA (G) Ⓜ LPM 10121 (48/6d.)

Note: An asterisk denotes a previously unissued take.

THIS AND the companion LP — RCA(G) LPM 10019 - present all but three titles excluding

alternate takes, of Henderson's Victor output.

*Shuffling* is an uneven performance, having sloppy ensemble passages and good solos from Harrison and Joe Smith, *St. Louis* and *Variety* are musically the highspots of the LP, particularly the former which has integrated ensemble work and fine solos by Harrison and Ladnier. From the first 1931 session *Singin'* has a lyrical Stewart solo, clearly influenced by listening to Beiderbecke's, but then the theme chorus is unquestionably based on the Trumbauer recording of this number. For the rest it is a question of musicians salvaging something from a series of quite dreadful numbers, some having appalling Uncle Tom lyrics, as often as not allied to mediocre arrangements sounding like publishers stocks. Curiously enough some of the worst numbers have outstanding solos — Stewart on *Roll on* and *Oh! it looks*, Stark on *My sweet tooth* and *I wanna*, and Hawkins on *Oh! it looks*, *Malinda's*, *Strangers* (he plays superbly on this) and *Take me away*. The final session includes two banal numbers by Russ Morgan — *Phantom* and *Tidal* — and a typically empty Will Hudson riff theme in *Hocus*, but on *Phantom* and *Hocus* there are fine Hawkins solos, the latter also including a typically adventurous contribution by Allen. The arrangement of *Phantom* is fussy and cluttered, that of *Tidal* sounds like a reject from the Casa Loma book, and one can only marvel that the soloists could rise above such crippling handicaps. I have not mentioned as yet the various vocalists who appear on most tracks, but will content myself



with the comment that it would be a brave reviewer who could state with any certainty which is the worst.

On the whole this is a sad example of a great band in various stages of musical disintegration — excluding about three tracks only — and it can only be recommended to the type of diehard collector who wants the 1924/25 Henderson's for the few bars of Armstrong on various titles. Recording is generally satisfactory, playing time 48½ minutes.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

## PAUL HORN

### JAZZ SUITE ON THE MASS TEXTS:

Quintet: Paul Horn (fl-1; alt-fl -2; clt-3; alt-4); Lynn Blessing (vib); Mike Lang (p); Bill Plummer (bs); Larry Bunker (d) plus Al Porcino, Conte Candoli (tpt); Frank Rosolino (tbn); Dick Leith (bs-tbn); Vince de Rosa (fr-h); Red Callender (tu); Dorothy Remsen, Ann Stockton (harp); Ken Watson, Emil Richards, Frank Flynn, Milt Holland (percussion); Loulie Jean Norman, Marilyn Powell, Sara Jane Tallman, Evangeline Carmichael, Betty Allen, William Cole, Vern Rowe, Maria Vernon (vcl chorus); Lalo Schifrin (composer, arr, conductor)

Hollywood — December 1964

*Kyrie-1 :: Interludum -4,5 :: Gloria -3 :: Credo -4 :: Sanctus -2 :: Prayer -6 :: Offortory -1,7 :: Agnus Dei -3*  
-5 omit choir; -6 unaccompanied bs-f solo; -7 quintet plus harp only

RCA SF8041 (37/6d.)

LALO SCHIFRIN'S "Jazz Suite on the Mass Texts" is not the first attempt to fuse jazz and liturgy although it should be pointed out that this LP was recorded five years ago and was released in America as long ago as August, 1965. In all cases such as this I find myself standing apart from the content of the work for the simple reason that I have no religious beliefs. Perhaps this accounts for the fact that I find Paul Horn's quintet constantly being dragged away from its normal method of expression by Schifrin's writing and the non-swinging choir, studiously (and accurately) reading their scores. Just occasionally the quintet finds an opening and bursts through to my level; in this context it probably sounds better than it really is. *Credo* builds to a roaring, screaming climax which really needed a Coltrane or a Dolphy to cap the final intensity. Horn is a fine soloist on all his instruments but I feel that he has yet to be well represented on record. There are flashes of greatness here, a good unaccompanied bass-flute solo on *Prayer* and some incisive alto on *Interludum*. Readers of a religious turn of mind may find the music to have cohesion; I am constantly aware of a collision of opposites. The playing time is thirty-one minutes and Paul Horn believes that this is the first recording in English of the Mass following the Vatican ruling that the mass may now be performed in the language of the country in which it is celebrated.

ALUN MORGAN

## J.B. HUTTO AND THE HAWKS

### HAWK SQUAT!:

J.B. Hutto (vcl, g); Herman Hassell (bs); Frank Kirkland (d)  
Chicago — 1966

### *Hip-shakin'*

add. Sunnyland Slim (org or p-1); Lee Jackson (g); Junior Pettis (bs) replaces Herman Hassell

Chicago — Spring 1968

*Speak your mind :: What can you get outside that you can't get at home :: The feeling is gone :: 20% alcohol-1*

Lee Jackson out; add Maurice McIntyre (ten); Dave Myers (bs) replaces Pettis

same date

*If you change your mind -1 :: Too much pride -1 :: The same mistake twice -1 :: Notoriety woman :: Send her home to me :: Hawk squat*

Delmark DS-617 (44/10d.)

MORE THAN a dozen years ago I bought a record by "J.B. and His Hawks" on Chance, under the mistaken impression that it was by J.B. Lenoir. The music on *Now she's gone* was a good deal tougher but I liked its earthy crudity. Sixteen years after he recorded it J.B. Hutto is still working south side joints and within the past couple of years has reached a wider

public. His music is still coarse-grained and has more than a hint of Howling Wolf's ferocity in it, as these recordings made mainly in 1968 demonstrate. *Hip shakin'* is a little earlier, made with the small trio that used to play at Turner's: there's a sensitivity of touch in this track, which I miss in the others. The record opens with the all too familiar Elmore James licks on *Speak your mind* and I feared another album of rather derivative Chicago music. But J.B. Hutto isn't like that — he can play the local standards on demand, but he can turn in an unusual lyric or an unexpected rhythm. *20% alcohol*, *Notoriety woman* and *Send her home* are fair examples of his brand of brassy blues. Sunnyland Slim plays piano on some tracks, opening them with his trademark phrases; I like his organ work better and he fills out the sound of the small group in a way which Maurice McIntyre, avant garde tenor player, or so the sleeve says, fails to do. I'm not too sure of the pressing — mine skips grooves and there's pre-echo on some tracks which is irritating. But technical faults apart a good example of the music of the joints before it gets self-conscious and goes on goodwill tours.

PAUL OLIVER

## JAZZ BANDS 1926-30

ADA BROWN (vcl) acc George Mitchell (cnt); Albert Nicholas (alt); Barney Bigard (ten); Luis Russell (p); Johnny St.Cyr (bj)  
Chicago — March 10. 1926

### *Panama limited blues*

acc George Mitchell (cnt); Luis Russell (p); Johnny St.Cyr (bj)  
same date

### *Tia Juana man*

### BILL BROWN AND HIS BROWNIES:

Billy Hicks, Charlie Johnson (tpt); Ralph James (alt, clt); Marvin Wyatt (ten, clt); Bill Caine (p); Harry Stevens (bj); George DeLeon (brass bs); Oliver Tynes (d)

New York City — March 1927

E-21986

*Bill Brown blues*

E-21989

*Hot lips*

### CHOCOLATE DANDIES:

Langston Curl, John Nesbitt (tpt); Claude Jones (tbn); Don Redman, Milton Senior (clt, alt); George Thomas (ten); Prince Robinson (ten, clt); Todd Rhodes (p); Dave Wilborn (bj); Lonnie Johnson (g); Bob Escudero (brass bs); Cuba Austin (d)

New York City — October 10, 1928

401219-A *Stardust*

401220-B *Birmingham breakdown*

OLIVER COBB (tpt, vcl) acc probably Eddie Johnson (p)

Grafton, Wis. — c. August 1930

L-461-1 *Cornet pleadin' blues, Part 1*

L-462-1 *Cornet pleadin' blues, Part 2*

### ELGAR'S CREOLE ORCHESTRA:

Possible Personnel: Emmanuel Perez, Joe Sudler (cnt); Harry Swift (tbn); Darnell Howard, Omer Simeon (clt, alt); Jimmy Dudley (clt, ten); Logan Thomas (p); Bill Shelby (bj); Lawson Buford (brass bs); Ben Thigpen (d); Charles Elgar (ldr)

Chicago — September 1926

E-3835 *Brotherly love*

E-3836 *Nightmare*

### KENTUCKY JAZZ BABIES:

unknown (tpt); Hess Grundy (tbn); Clifford Hayes (vln); Johnny Gatewood (p); Cal Smith (g)

Chicago — October 28, 1929

57341 *Old folks shake*

57342 *No more blues*

HATTIE BURLESON (vcl) acc Don Albert (tpt); Siki Collins

(sop); Allen Van (p); John Henry Braggs (g); Charlie Dixon (brass bs)

Dallas — c. November 1928

DAL-744-A *Superstitious blues*

DAL-745-A *Sadie's servant room blues*

### ORIGINAL MEMPHIS FIVE:

Phil Napoleon (tpt); Miff Mole (tbn); Jimmy Lytell (clt); Frank Signorelli (p); Jack Roth (d)

New York City — September 1927



**Historical** Ⓜ ASC5829-16 (52/6d.)

THIS IS AN all too typical Historical compilation though there are some interesting and rare tracks included, and duplication only arises on the Chocolate Dandies (Parlophone PMC-7038) and Bill Brown (OFC(Arg) OFC 35) tracks, though surprisingly *Hot lips* is a different take to the OFC version.

Ada Brown is a good 'classic blues' singer with a strong clear voice and her vocals and excellent work by Mitchell makes her tracks well worth having. Brown's band was only average, *Hot* being the slightly better of the two performances. There are no outstanding soloists though the clarinetist and pianist are reasonable, and the rhythm gets bogged down on *Bill, Birmingham* and *Stardust* are outstanding McKinney's tracks, with superb ensemble playing and good solos from Nesbitt and Robinson on *Birmingham*, and Nesbitt, Redman and Johnson on *Stardust*. Cobb, an Armstrong admirer, hews closely to the Armstrong line both vocally and instrumentally, but he was not purely a copyist and his work is curiously engaging.

The Elgar tracks are remarkably good — I will take some persuading that the published personnel is correct — and *Nightmare*, a complex arrangement, formed the basis of Alphonse Trent's version some years later. *Brotherly* is also very well played, with tight, cohesive ensemble work, and a good clarinet leading the final chorus. A soprano sax can be heard on this track, and one must regret that the band was not recorded again. *Old* and *No more* are very different, being unsophisticated and rural sounding, but Hayes's fiddle and Smith's guitar are fitting in context and the music has a gaiety and charm that stifles criticism. Burleson has a strong, somewhat nasal delivery, and the much praised Collins (by musicians who heard him with Don Albert and other territory bands) and Albert support her splendidly in two excellent performances. *Lovey* sounds anaemic in comparison to previous tracks, but includes an assured solo from Mole and is a pleasantly melodic theme.

There are enough good tracks on this LP to make it worthy of consideration. Recording quality is reasonable, playing time 48½ minutes.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

**DUKE JORDAN****LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES:**

Sonny Cohn (tpt); Charlie Rouse (ten); Duke Jordan (p); Eddie Kahn (bs); Art Taylor (d)

New York City — January 12, 1962

*No problem-1 :: No problem-2 :: No problem-3 :: Jazz vendor :: Subway Inn :: The feeling of love-1 :: The feeling of love-2*

**Musidisc CV989 (28/6d.)**

HOW GOOD IT is to see a Duke Jordan LP on the market. True, this one has appeared here before — collectors will no doubt have Egmont AJS 22 — but hopefully it will help to make Jordan's name known to newcomers to jazz.

I don't want to repeat the story surrounding the making of this disc. Suffice to say that Jordan originally composed the four basic themes in 1959 but had to wait until 1962 before putting them on record, or indeed getting proper credit for them. Incidentally, it should be noted that although *No problem* is used three times, and *The feeling of love* twice, these are not just alternate takes of the same approaches to the tunes. In each case Jordan has altered the tempo and mood, and the soloists therefore come up with fresh ideas rather than just playing around the same pattern.

I seem to recall the choice of Cohn on trumpet causing a few raised eyebrows when the disc first appeared but personally I find his style extremely pleasant. What a change to listen to someone who isn't afraid to speak out with a broad, clear tone and who doesn't go in for ugly distortions of his sound. Rouse is perhaps the weak link in the group, his soloing being almost routine. He has a warm tone, and he swings, but really has little to say.

Duke Jordan is, of course, the star of the disc. A pianist of great ability and inventiveness, he rarely falters. His work is always precise and logical, yet still full of warmth, and one is never

conscious of any undue striving for effect. The first version of *The feeling of love* is a fine example of his delicate ballad style, and on the faster numbers he displays his penchant for light, but firm, swing.

A valuable LP. If you're a Jordan fan and haven't got it — here's your chance. If Jordan is a new name to you — give the disc a try and I think you'll be pleasantly surprised. Like the America LPs reviewed on other pages, this has been imported by Disc Imports Ltd, and is distributed by Selecta.

JIM BURNS

**HAROLD LAND****THE FOX:**

Dupree Bolton (tpt); Harold Land (ten); Elmo Hope (p); Herbie Lewis (bs); Frank Butler (d)

Los Angeles — August 1959

*The fox :: Mirror-mind Rose :: One second, please :: Sims-a plenty :: Little Chris :: One down*

**Contemporary S7619 (\$5.00)**

IT'S NOT SO MUCH the breathtaking pace of the title track that strikes one, so much as the confidence, and, even more startling, the imaginativeness with which Land and his men face up to its demands. Yet this item soon proves to be only a brisk prelude to the creativity to come. With *Rose* we enter the world of Elmo Hope the composer, one in which pervasive sadness seems inseparably wedded to thankless resolve. Land contrasts extended notes with beautifully integrated double-tempo runs. Bolton mines the ballad's harmonic depth, and Hope himself lights on some pale rays of sunshine. *One second, please* stresses Butler's razorsharp time and the fierce ease with which the soloists exploit it. Bolton comes on here like Bill Hardman to play two fine choruses and there are exciting breaks for horns and drummer. Hear, too, how Butler parallels the melody in *Sims a-plenty*, a piece in which Land demonstrates yet again, like Mobley in the East, that relaxation could go hand in hand with melodic and rhythmic complexity. *One down*, starting with a Latin flavour, soon knits into a solid four, its taut swing split momentarily by sorties into suspended time. Bolton, now intimate, now aggressive, varies the pressure of his attack, Hope starts sparely, then moves into a more complex dissertation for Land to follow out its threads, and Butler builds a strong solo edifice without once jeopardizing his largely implied beat. All four of these compositions have intricate melodic structures braced by harmonic frameworks dense enough to sustain the most determined improvisational assaults. *Little Chris*, the second Land number, is only slightly less sophisticated than the Hope items, reminiscent in its rhythmic complexity of the repertoire of the Brown/Roach quintet, with which its writer made his reputation. It draws characteristically intense performances from the soloists.

A classic from the day it was first issued, *The fox* achieves that rare blend, the combination of inspired soloing with compositional work of a high order. Today, a decade later, Hope is dead, Bolton has fallen back into the obscurity from which he briefly emerged, and the others are pursuing their separate paths. Now that this extraordinary album is once again available, its acquisition cannot be too warmly urged.

MICHAEL JAMES

**JOHN LITTLEJOHN**

Rogert Pulliam, Willie Young (ten); John Littlejohn (vcl, g); Monroe Jobes Jr. (g); Booker Snidgrave (d)

Chicago — November 14, 1968

*What in the world you goin' to do :: Treat me wrong :: Catfish blues :: Kiddeo :: Slidin' home -1 :: Dream :: Reelin' and rockin' :: Been around the world :: Shake your money maker -1* no vocal on this track

**Arhoolie 1043 (52/6d.)**

FOR WHOSE who feel that the blues is dying John Littlejohn has been particularly welcome. He's in his late thirties and he plays a Chicago kind of blues with a sufficiently down home sound to suggest his Mississippi background. I suspect that my own impressions are not shared by many listeners or at least, not those I've mentioned, For I find Littlejohn is no reassurance as to the real vitality of the blues today; he plays good slide guitar, amplified; he sings with feeling. But all that he does one has heard before. A bit of Elmore James can be heard on most



tracks, *Catfish Blues* comes over like vintage Muddy Waters, *Reelin' and rockin'* has more than a slice of Jimmy Reed. The influence of these major singers is fair enough, but it is hard to detect anything that is especially *Littlejohn* in his work. Chris Strachwitz, who recorded him, points out that he is "A prolific composer of songs" but those original items on this album — and there aren't many — are really pretty cliché-ridden instrumentally and lyrically. After the foregoing it may seem hypocritical then to say that it is a good record, listenable and with the genuine feel of Chicago about it. But this is fair I feel. Littlejohn is like a Bill Gaither, a Kid Prince Moore or a Tony Hollins of the present time — a good, working bluesman but with nothing very special of his own to say, as yet. This is his first recording and I imagine that regular working, and some pressure to produce new compositions may lead to good future sessions.

PAUL OLIVER

## WINGY MANONE

### WINGY MANONE AND HIS ORCHESTRA 1936-1939:

Wingy Manone (tpt, vcl); Matty Matlock, Joe Marsala (clt); Eddie Miller (ten); Conrad Lanoue (p); Hilton 'Nappy' Lamare (g); Artie Shapiro (bs); Ray Bauduc (d)

New York City — April 9, 1936

BS 101199-1 *Dallas blues*

Wingy Manone (tpt, vcl); Murray Williams (clt) Tommy Macey (alt); Eddie Miller (ten); Conrad Lanoue (p); Carmen Mastren (g); Artie Shapiro (bs); Sam Weiss (d)

New York City — May 8, 1936

BS 101573-1 *Basin Street blues*

BS 101574-1 *Hesitation blues*

BS 101578-1 *Panama-1*

-1 no vocal on this track

Wingy Manone (tpt, vcl); George Brunies (tbn); Matty Matlock (clt); Joe Marsala (ten); Conrad Lanoue (p); Artie Shapiro (bs); Danny Alvin (d)

New York City — February 4, 1937

BS 04565-1 *Formal night in Harlem*

BS 04566-1 *Sweet Lorraine*

BS 04567-1 *Boo-hoo*

BS 04570-1 *Oh, say! can you swing?*

Wingy Manone (tpt, vcl); Joe Marsala (clt); Babe Russin (ten); same p; bs; d as above; Jack Le Maire (g)

New York City — September 28, 1937

BS 13880-1 *I ain't got nobody*

BS 13884-1 *Jazz me blues-1*

-1 no vocal on this track

Wingy Manone (tpt, vcl); Brad Gowans (v-tbn); Al Kavich (clt, alt); Wilder Chase (p); Bobby Bennett (g); Sid Jacobs (bs); Danny Alvin (d)

New York City — May 23, 1938

BS 023418-1 *Manone blues*

BS 023419-1 *The flat foot floogie*

BS 023420-1 *Little Joe from Chicago*

Wingy Manone (tpt, vcl); Leon 'Chu' Berry (ten); Buster Bailey (clt); Conrad Lanoue (p); Zeb Julian (g); Jules Cassard (bs); William 'Cozy' Cole (d)

New York City — April 26, 1939

BS 36535-1 *Corrine, Corrina*

BS 36537-1 *Jumpy nerves -1*

BS 36539-1 *Boogie woogie*

-1 no vocal on this track

RCA(G) Ⓜ LPM 10123 (48/6d.)

DALLAS, FORMAL night, Sweet Lorraine, Boo hoo and Oh, say unfortunately duplicate tracks

on the recent RCA(E) LP RD-8050, though this was issued some months earlier.

Predictably, the final three tracks are the best — *Jumpy* uses the *In the mood* riff — with Berry in fine form and Bailey taking fluent and balanced solos. The material in other instances makes it difficult for the musicians to do other than turn in routine performances *Formal*, *Boo hoo*, *Flat foot* and *Little Joe* — but given reasonable themes Manone and his sidemen perform capably, sometimes more than capably. Manone himself is a pleasant minor trumpeter when he keeps within his limitations of technique, and on *Hesitation*, *Panama*, *Sweet* and *Dallas* his solos and sober lead work is attrac-

tive. *Hesitation* and *Panama* are, in fact, excellent tracks, and the pleasant New Orleans style clarinet solos are, I suspect, the work of Eddie Miller. Marsala is a better clarinetist than tenor player, as is adequately demonstrated by his solos on *I ain't* and *Jazz me*, while Gowans has a good solo on *Manone blues* (lyrics in part by courtesy of *Backwater blues*), and Miller (*Dallas*), Matlock (*Oh, say, Boo hoo*), and Mastren (*Hesitation*) make effective contributions. Manone's singing may not be to everyone's taste, but after listening to the vocalists on the Henderson and Rollini LPs reviewed in this issue I find him agreeable enough.

These casual jam session type performances have no claim to profundity, but are generally enjoyable, which might aptly summarise Manone's own contributions to jazz until the time when he reworked his 'hit' *Isle of Capri* with increasing desperation. A major soloist such as Berry can lift the overall level of the performance, but even the weakest tracks are seldom without moments of good jazz. For those sympathetic to this area of jazz this is an LP worth obtaining. Recording is excellent, playing time 44 minutes. Mr. Gerd H.W. Behrens' sleeve notes are every bit as dreadful as Mr. Johnny Simmen suggests on another page.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

## MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

LEADBELLY (vcl, g); Cisco Houston (vcl, g); Woody Guthrie (vcl, g)

New York City — Autumn 1946

D669 *Alabama bound*

D674 *The Midnight special*

LEADBELLY (vcl, g); Josh White (vcl, g)

*Don't lie buddy*

WOODY GUTHRIE (vcl, g), or mandolin -1 )

*Poor Lazarus*

add Cisco Houston (vcl, g)

*Devilish Mary -1 :: Who's gonna shoe your pretty little feet*

add Pete Seeger (vcl, bj)

*Mule skinner blues*

Pete Seeger out; add Sonny Terry (hca)

*Crawdad song -1 :: It was sad when that great ship went down*

add Alec Stewart (vcl, g)

*Glory*

Terry, Stewart out. Add Bess Lomax (g); Baldwin Hawes (vln)

*900 Miles* (no vcl)

PETE SEEGER (vcl, bj); unidentified vcl

*Cindy*

BOB CAREY (vcl, g)

*Sportin' life blues*

add Roger Spring (vcl, g); Eric Darling (vcl, bj)

*Tom Dooley :: Raise a rukus :: Round the Bay of Mexico*

Storyville Special Ⓜ 616.009 (25/-)

PERHAPS IT would be better titled "Versions of Classic American Folk Song" rather than

"Classic Versions of American Folk Song", for few of the performances here could merit the description "classic". There's a few though, that come close to it, the title song included. Recorded in some cases over twenty years ago, these items represent a stage in the study of American folk music both Negro and white, and a particular attitude to folk song which saw it as a panacea for some of society's ills. The combined talents of Leadbelly and Sonny Terry with Guthrie and Houston on a gospel song, *Glory*, is indicative: none of the singers were basically religious ones, their collective performance was the inspiration, if that's the word, of Moses Asch. Yet we must acknowledge that we are heavily indebted to Asch for his dedicated recording of Leadbelly at this difficult period when few others were interested in him, and of Guthrie and Terry when they were in their prime. So, if some of the performances aren't classic they're certainly historic. Some too, are fine in their own right: the splendid instrumental *900 miles*, Guthrie and Houston singing *Devilish Mary* and Guthrie's own rare version of the old ballad *Poor Lazarus*. I like Pete Seeger's bright playing on *Cindy*, and if Bob Carey's *Sportin' life* is too sweet for my taste, with Darling and Spring he performs a fine *Tom Dooley*. Leadbelly, Guthrie, Houston, and Josh White are no longer with us and this collection acts as a modest memorial to



them. It sounds very remote now and to the blues enthusiast may have little to recommend it. But at this distance in time these recordings have a place in the complicated history of America's emergent awareness of the richness of her folk tradition.

PAUL OLIVER

## CHARLES MINGUS

### RIGHT NOW:

John Handy (alt-1); Clifford Jordan (ten, fl-2); Jane Getz (p); Charles Mingus (bs); Danny Richmond (d)

Jazz Workshop, San Francisco — c. 1968

*New fables-1 :: Meditation (for a pair of wire cutters)-2*

**American 30AM6063 (28/6d.)**

N.B. This LP, and others on the same label, is imported by Disc Imports Ltd., 36 Dalton Street, Manchester M2 6LD, and distributed by Selecta.

THIS IS hardly the place to dilate upon the differences between the recordings Mingus makes in the studio and those done on location, but it does seem that whilst the latter are just as rich in detail, their overall organisation is not so tightly controlled. This at any rate is the case with the present album, a typically expressionist offering by a Mingus quartet augmented for one item by Handy.

These 47 minutes present most of the techniques Mingus has introduced into his small-band approach during the past thirteen years. Tempi and rhythms are constantly changing, a very wide dynamic range is covered, extremes of moods are projected, and in fact no holds are barred where tonal variation and rhythmic virtuosity are concerned. In the hands of a lesser artist this method could easily mean disruption or even disintegration, but Mingus's unique personality and unremitting involvement in the music lead his sidemen over rapids and through whirlpools alike with never so much as a backward glance.

In this headlong course, Richmond's presence is a decided asset. Jordan, always an honest player and increasingly an inventive one, is better represented by his long, fervent opening solo in *Meditation* than by his similar sequence in *Faubus*, where his associates drive him eventually to a strained and thoroughly untypical use of the topmost register. Handy's intervention in the latter item lacks the distinction of the contributions he has made to earlier Mingus tracks, but is none the less exhilarating, ranging from a Criss-like opening to a final downhome sequence in the best traditions of Sonny Stitt. Jane Getz plays a minor role in *Fables* but is portrayed by *Meditation* as an as yet immature but nevertheless refreshing stylist, touched but not enthralled by Herbie Hancock's example. Her closing dialogue with Mingus, this time playing bowed, is one to remember. Yet as ever it is the bassist who dominates his colleagues, goading them at every juncture to be more fully themselves.

MICHAEL JAMES

## PHINEAS NEWBORN Jr.

### PLEASE SEND ME SOME ONE TO LOVE:

Phineas Newborn Jr. (p); Ray Brown (bs); Elvin Jones (d)

Los Angeles — February 12 and 13, 1969

*Please send me someone to love :: Rough ridin' :: Come Sunday :: Brentwood blues :: He's a real gone guy :: Black coffee :: Little Niles :: Stay on it*

**Contemporary S 7622 (\$5.00)**

CUSTOMERS for this issue would, I am sure, not be seen dead with a copy of Sammy Rimington's record (reviewed below). Yet this idiom is as limited as New Orleans copyism, if not more so. Newborn is a fast, expert pianist whose playing is on the Bill Evans side of Oscar Peterson, so to speak, rather than the Ahmad Jamal side, which means that he tends to gentleness rather than hard swinging. Everything is perfectly executed and accompanied — how could it be otherwise! with Brown and Jones on hand? But, to me, it is completely lifeless. Yet Leonard Feather's sleeve notes assert that Newborn is marvellous (in between telling us how marvellous Mr. Feather is himself for having noticed this a few years ago). Obviously lovers of piano jazz must try this one for themselves and must put out of their minds my opinion that this is just high quality background music eminently worthy of one's inattention. JOHN POSTGATE

## NOW CREATIVE ARTS JAZZ ENSEMBLE

### NOW:

Peter Montalbano (tpt); Patrick O'Hara (tbn); Dale Reamer (ten); Bert Wilson, Mike Breen (ten, sop); Rahim Roach (alt); David Wilson (vib); Robin Young (p); Chris Amberger (bs); Smiley Winters (d)

Berkeley, California — October 21, 1968

*Madness :: Pretty good :: Doris :: Nirvana :: Daniel :: Now*

**Arhoolie 8002 (52/6d)**

THE NOW Creative Arts Jazz Ensemble is connected with the Now Creative Arts Guild and Dance

Centre which presents mixed-media concerts — music, dance, film, drama — in the San Francisco area. Vibist-arranger Dave Wilson directs the group.

I think I may as well be quite honest about this and say at once that I've very little sympathy with the kind of music on the LP. It claims to be avant-garde and I can't accept that it is. If distorted sounds by the saxophonists and trumpeter, group cacophony, pointless contributions by the bassist and vibist, and drumming which seems to bear little relation to the rest of the music, is avant-garde, then I'm wrong and the group has succeeded. And maybe I am wrong? After all, I can recall that similar comments were made about the boppers when I thought they were the great new stars of the jazz world. But I'd suggest that the different between swing and bop was far less complex than the one between bop and the music of the Now Creative Arts Jazz Ensemble: it isn't only musical either.

I'll admit that the musicians seem to be sincere; I'm not suggesting otherwise. But it is hard to shake off the total feeling of pretentiousness especially when one hears the title track, *Now*, which lasts for fifteen seconds and comprises a gentleman calling out "one, two-one, two, three four", a blast from the assembled musicians, and Carol Wilson singing "Now" twice. Maybe there is some significance in this — and I don't doubt that one of this magazine's earnest supporters of the avant-garde could turn in a 5,000 word essay to explain it — but it just seems pointless to me.

Incidentally, the photograph on the sleeve labelled "Smiley Winters" actually shows a drummer and a trumpeter; I've presumed Winters is the drummer. The trumpeter is not Montalbano but there is no other indication as to who he is, or whether he was in the personnel for the recording, so I have therefore ignored him. JIM BURNS

## CHARLIE PARKER

### BIRD ON 52ND STREET:

Miles Davis (tpt); Charlie Parker (alt); Duke Jordan (p); Tommy Potter (bs); Max Roach (d)

Onyx Club, New York City — Spring, 1948

*Theme :: Shaw 'nuff :: Out of nowhere :: Hot house :: This time the dream's on me :: Night in Tunisia :: My old flame :: 52nd Street theme :: The way you look tonight :: Out of nowhere :: Chasin' the Bird :: This time the dream's on me :: Dizzy atmosphere :: How high the moon :: Theme*

**America M 30AM6061 (28/6d.)**

SHADES OF *The Sound!* Who filled Royo's shoes on this occasion is not revealed, but at least he got Bird's solos down adequately enough. As for the rest of the band, fortunes vary. Davis, excised save for the chase passages, is very distant, Jordan almost equally so, and the bass line varies from prominent to a dull thud. Except for his cymbals — hear how he obliterates the piano when he switches to hi-hat in *Look* — Roach comes off fairly well, his snare and bass drum accents on a par with the alto.

As the record plays, one's ears, strangely enough, attune themselves to the distortions; what seems unacceptable at first merely sounds like poor balance after some minutes' concentrated listening. This is no record for the newcomer or the casual fan, but the confirmed devotee will find rich rewards, in the shape both of new twists on familiar licks and also those ineffable moments when the altoist's genius extracts fresh melodic beauty from familiar material. Parker, in fact, is at his least predictable in these 40 minutes, fooling around at one moment only to execute a phrase of staggering complexity the next. On the fast items, which predominate, Roach drives along, a rhythmic alter ego, his commentaries complementing and, one somehow feels, releasing his leader's pent-up



eloquence.

It has been suggested that the issuing of albums of this type is a disservice to Parker's memory, a betrayal of the musical principles his work stood for, but that reproach, to my mind, finds its answer in the man's very stature. Extracts like these, far from diminishing his art, help us the better to understand it. We should surely be the poorer without them.

MICHAEL JAMES

## DUKE PEARSON

NOW HEAR THIS:

Jim Bossy, Randy Brecker, Burt Collins, Joe Shepley, Marvin Stamm (tpt); Garnett Brown, Jimmy Cleveland, Benny Powell, Kenny Rupp (tbn); Jerry Dodgion, Al Gibbons (alt); Frank Foster, Lew Tabakin (ten); Pepper Adams (bar); Duke Pearson (p); Bob Cranshaw (bs); Mickey Roker (d); Andy Bey (vcl)

New York City — December 2 and 3, 1968

*Disapproachment :: I'm tired cryin' over you vAB :: Tones for Joan's bones :: Amanda :: Dad digs Mom (and Mom digs Dad) :: Minor league :: Here's that rainy day :: Make it good :: The days of wine and roses*

Blue Note BST84308 (43/9d.)

DUKE PEARSON's second big band LP is nearly twice as impressive as "Introducing Duke Pearson's Big Band" (Blue Note BST84276). The orchestra now possesses a sense of dynamics, the ability to use light and shade and that indefinable feeling of sheer professional confidence which only comes when a group of men has worked together for months. All the arrangements are by Pearson except the opening *Disapproachment*, composed and arranged by Frank Foster (and featuring the composer in a Coltrane-like groove). The writing seems to have been designed to show off the band's capabilities in every possible situation, for it ranges from the Ellingtonian mood of *Dad digs Mom* to the no-holds barred *Make it good* on which Pepper Adams and Lew Tabakin uncork some of the most uninhibited solos on the LP. But it is Pearson who holds the reins throughout for he is one of the most sensitive and intelligent accompanists since Al Haig. He knows how to usher in the full might of the ensemble (listen to the opening of *Amanda* for example) and when to coax a soloist to produce something slightly above his normal standard. He has taken Chick Corea's *Tones for Joan's bones* (first heard on a Blue Mitchell LP) and turned it into a concerto for Joe Shepley's flugel horn. I remember first hearing Shepley on a London LP entitled "Westchester Workshop" several years ago; on the evidence of *Joan's bones* he is now a major voice. Full credit to Pearson for featuring almost every man in the band; Jerry Dodgion takes over *Rainy day* and displays a depth of emotion which I never suspected existed before. The rhythm section is excellent in every way with Mickey Roker showing that he is a "natural" big band drummer. (Prior to the Pearson orchestra Mickey had played with small groups only.) The trombone section has a beautiful and rich sound in section (hear them behind Dodgion on *Rainy day*) and it is good to hear Benny Powell again. He shares *Wine and roses* with Frank Foster.

After all the mournful valedictions for the passing of the big bands it is heartening to have evidence of the existence of three superb orchestras, the Mel Lewis-Thad Jones, Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland and Duke Pearson units. It is also good to find an easy interchange of personnel as it seems to prove that the new band leaders are interested primarily in producing music rather than wiping out their rivals. Garnett Brown, Jerry Dodgion and Pepper Adams, for example, manage to work with the Pearson and Mel Lewis-Thad Jones bands while Lew Tabakin appears with Duke and the Clark Terry Orchestra. (The latter is another fine new band which has not, unfortunately, made any commercially-available LPs yet.) The Pearson album is beautifully recorded and plays for forty-three minutes.

ALUN MORGAN

## MA RAINEY

OH MY BABE BLUES:

Gertrude "Ma" Rainey (vcl) acc possibly Milas Pruitt (g)

Chicago — c. August 1924

1824-3 *Shave 'em dry*

1825-2 *Farewell Daddy blues*

Ma Rainey (vcl) acc Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Green (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt); Fletcher Henderson (p); Charlie Dixon (bj);

Kaiser Marshall (d)

New York City — c. October 16, 1924

1927-2 *Countin' the blues*

Ma Rainey (vcl) acc Joe Smith (cnt); Charlie Green (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt); Coleman Hawkins (bs-sx); Fletcher Henderson (p); Charlie Dixon (bj)

New York City — January 1926

2374-1 *Oh my babe blues*

Ma Rainey (vcl); acc Dave Nelson (cnt); possibly Albert Wynn (tbn); possibly Stump Evans (alt, sop); probably Lil Henderson (p); unknown bj; probably Cedric Odom (d)

Chicago — c. March 1926

2451-3 *Jealousy blues*

Ma Rainey (vcl) acc Homer Hobson (cnt); Albert Wynn (tbn); Doc Cheatham (sop); Tom Brown (clt, alt); Lil Henderson (p); Rip Bassett (bj); Ben Thigpen (d); unknown slide whistle

Chicago — c. August 1926

2628-1 *Sissy blues*

Ma Rainey (vcl) acc unidentified group

Chicago — c. December 1926

4021-2 *Don't fish in my sea*

Ma Rainey (vcl) acc unknown p

Chicago — c. February 1927

*Soon this morning*

Ma Rainey (vcl) acc possibly Georgia Tom Dorsey (p); Tampa Red (kazoo); unknown bj; jug

Chicago — c. June 1928

20662-3 *Log camp blues*

20664-2 *Hustlin' blues*

Ma Rainey (vcl); Papa Charlie Jackson (vcl, bj)

Chicago — c. October 1928

20921-4 *Ma and Pa poorhouse blues*

Chicago — c. December 1928

21044-1 *Big feeling blues*

Biograph ® BLP-12011 (52/6d.)

ANYONE wanting Ma Rainey's output in chronological sequence is advised to seek out the Rarities

LPs that are presenting her recordings in this form, following on from the first sixteen titles issued on Riverside RLP-8807. Those wanting a representative example of her art will find this LP perfectly satisfying as far as it goes.

The final four tracks with their roots in country dance and vaudeville music respectively, show how deep was Rainey's blues background, for even in the jug band setting there is a majestic quality to her singing. Jackson, on *Ma and Pa* and *Big*, proves an excellent foil for Rainey and his own light-hearted vocal passages are good. *Jealousy*, *Farewell*, *Oh*, *Countin'* and *Sissy* all offer quite superb vocals, entirely in the blues tradition though most of these numbers are not in the 12 bar form (*Sissy* uses the melody of *Hesitating blues* incidentally). There is fine Armstrong to be heard on *Countin'* and good Green on *Oh*, but even when the backing group is not of the highest calibre the singing enables one to ignore the fact. When one considers the mediocre recording quality of most Paramount releases, in evidence on some of these tracks, one can only marvel at the manner in which Ma Rainey's voice comes through, and speculate on how she would have sounded on Okeh, for example. Despite the restricted sound quality this is an unusually fine LP, unreservedly recommended to readers who do not already possess the titles on other LPs. ALBERT MCCARTHY

## RARE BANDS 1925-30

BLUE RIBBON SYNCOPATORS:

Ted Colon (tpt); Herbert Diemer (alt, bar); Willard Buster (ten); George West (p); Gilbert Roberts (bj); Seymour Todd (brass bs); Hurley Diemer (d)

New York City — April 29, 1927

144067-3 *Scratch*

144070-3 *Memphis sprawler*

CECIL SCOTT AND HIS BRIGHT BOYS:

Bill Coleman, Frank Newton (tpt); Dickie Wells (tbn); John Williams, Harold McFarren (alt); Cecil Scott (clt, ten, bar); Don Frye (p); Rudolph Williams (bj); Mack Walker (brass bs); Lloyd Scott (d)

New York City — November 19, 1929



57709-1 *Lawd, Lawd-1*

57710-1 *In a corner*

-1 band vocal on this track

**WILLIAMSON'S BEALE STREET FROLIC ORCHESTRA:**

Charley Williamson (cnt); unknown (tbn); Douglas Williams (clt); James Alston (p); unknown bj; Booker T. Washington (d)

Memphis — March 1, 1927

37973-1 *Memphis scronch*

37974-3 *Bear wallow blues*

**NEW ORLEANS OWLS:**

Bill Padron (cnt); Frank Neito (tbn); Benjie White, Pinky Vidacovich (clt, alt); Lester Smith (ten); Sigfre Christensen (p); Rene Gelpi (g); Dan LeBlanc (brass bs); Earl Crumb (d)

Atlanta — November 8, 1926

143112-2 *White ghost shivers*

**JELLY JAMES AND HIS FEWSICIANS:**

George Temple (tpt); David 'Jelly' James (tbn); Jerome Pasquall or Craig Watson (clt, alt); Henry Duncan (p); Ollie Blackwell (bj); Ralph Bedall (d)

New York City — c. January 28, 1927

GEX-481 *Make me know it*

GEX-482 *Georgia bo bo*

**TINY PARHAM AND HIS MUSICIANS:**

Ray Hobson (cnt); Ike Covington (tbn); Charles Johnson (clt, alt); Elliott Washington (vln); Tony Parham (p); Mike McKendrick (bj); Quinn Wilson (brass bs); Ernie Marrero (d)

Chicago — February 1, 1929

48846-2 *Stompin' on down*

Chicago — February 2, 1929

48848-2 *Tiny's stomp (Oriental blues)*

Punch Miller (tpt); Ike Covington (tbn); possibly Omer Simeon (alt, clt); unknown (clt, alt, ten); Tiny Parham (p); Mike McKendrick (bj); Milt Hinton (brass bs); possibly Jimmy Bertrand (d)

Chicago — November 4, 1930

62931-2 *Doin' the jug jug*

62934-1 *Blue moon blues*

**WALTER BARNES AND HIS ROYAL CREOLIANS:**

Laurence 'Cicero' Thomas, George Wright (tpt); Ed Burke, Bradley Bullett (tbn); Walter Barnes (clt, alt); Irby Gage, Wilson Underwood, Lucius Wilson (sax, clt); Paul Johnson (p); William Hall (bj); Quinn Wilson or Louis Thompson (brass bs); William Winston (d); unknown male vocalist

Chicago — c. December 24, 1928

C-2705 *It's tight like that*

**Historical**  **ASC5829-7 (52/6d.)**

DUPLICATION problems may exist for some collectors with the tracks by Scott (RCA(F)

86.376), Williamson (RCA(F) 86.452) and the New Orleans Owls (VJM VLP-21). Parham's *Stompin'* is a different take to that on RCA(F) 130.285.

The Blue Ribbon Syncopators deserve praise for trying hard and achieve a not unattractive bouncy ensemble sound, but only the trumpet solos rise above mediocrity. *Lawd* has a fine flowing solo by Coleman, reasonably alto and baritone contributions, the latter by Cecil Scott, but *In* is uneven musically with a very good solo by Wells, an excellent bridge passage by Coleman, and poor clarinet and baritone solos by the leader. The Williamson's are entirely dispensible, not least the hideous clarinet solos, and *White* is not one of the better Owls performances though including a neat solo by Padron.

*Make* is pedestrian, both in solo and ensemble passages, but *Georgia* is reasonable with pleasant contributions from Temple and Duncan. The first two Parham tracks have their moments, the attractive *Stompin'* having good solos by Hobson, Parham and Wilson. *Doin'* is much brighter rhythmically and there is a very good solo from Miller, while *Blue moon* is routine, with Miller, if it is indeed he, far less adventurous. Barnes's *It's tight* perks up at the close but apart from a trumpet passage by Thomas is ponderous. Recording quality is passable on most tracks though on the dull side, playing time 46 minutes. Musically this is a distinctly forgettable LP.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

**SAMMY RIMINGTON**

**EVERYBODY'S TALKIN' 'BOUT SAMMY:**

Sammy Rimington (clt); Andy Finch (p); Derek Cook (bs); 'K' Minter (d)

London — September 9, 1969

**Shreveport**

Rimington plays alt

same date

**Hot lips**

add Bjarne Andersen (tbn)

same date

**At sundown**

omit Andersen; add Kay Younger (vcl); Rimington plays ten

same date

**When a woman loves a man :: Solitude**

omit Younger; add Andersen (tbn); and Peter Kjellin (tpt)

same date

**Sunday :: June in January**

as last, but Rimington plays clt

same date

**Love nest :: Sweetheart of my dreams :: Porter's love song**

**77 Records**  **77 LEU 12/36 (39/5d.)**

SAMMY Rimington is a British musician, a

following of New Orleans jazz, who has qualified

by the statutory visit to the Crescent City itself (I believe the Board of Examiners no longer requires candidates to obtain a prison sentence while there). This L.P., with its mixed Scandinavian and British personnel, is apparently his first under his own name. It is sometimes a little difficult to be fair to these enthusiastic followers of New Orleans jazz but this issue is at least free of any genuine New Orleans men to show up the imitators. On its own terms it is a good record: the choice of songs is not hidebound, Rimington (on clarinet) stands head and shoulders above his fellows in both musicianship and jazz sense, and the pattern of small group, vocal and full band pieces makes for variety. The leader's clarinet style is not in direct imitation of any particular New Orleans man, which is a relief; so one can hear echoes of Lewis, Simeon and Albert Nicholas in his playing. This means he is on the way to emancipation: he is forming his own style by the usual fashion of practising in public. On alto he is vigorous but almost a carbon copy of Cap'n John Handy; the tenor saxophone is his weakest instrument (on *Sunday* his part in the ensemble reminded me unexpectedly of Bechet's tenor on his one-man-band version of *The Sheik*). The standard of his fellow musicians is modest but adequate, except for Miss Younger's singing (her model is Billie Holiday) which is even more modest and which will make any true lover of Lady curl up at the edges. Fortunately most of the customers for this issue will not have heard of Billie Holiday — Miss Younger had not, either, until Rimington lent her a few records. Within its little frog-pond this is a creditable and forward-looking record. The acoustic standard is low and much of side 2, on my review copy, seems to have been recorded on sandpaper.

JOHN POSTGATE

**MAX ROACH**

**SPEAK, BROTHER, SPEAK!:**

Clifford Jordan (ten); Mal Waldron (p); Eddie Khan (bs); Max Roach (d)

Jazz Workshop, San Francisco — c. 1968

**Speak, brother, speak! :: A variation**

**American 30AM6057 (28/6d.)**

**SPEAK** is in essence a blues that features each musician in turn, the solos being separated by

short suspended interludes and based on varying tempi and rhythms. *A variation* employs the same basic layout, except that no set number of bars is imposed and a chase passage between tenorist and drummer introduces the latter's concluding solo. In each case Jordan is featured first, to be followed by Waldron, Khan and Roach in that order, and the total playing time is 47½ minutes. So straightforward a conception might on the fact of it be thought unequal to the task of sustaining interest over two long pieces. As it is, the album is a triumph for Roach, who inspires his men to produce their finest work, treating us throughout to as moving



an exposition of the jazz drummer's art as can ever have been captured on record. Shorn of all superfluties yet rich in interest, the album has a cumulative effect on the listener, the emotional currents within the music gathering force as each performance unfolds.

As may be expected, the detail of Roach's own playing, both in the section and in his two magnificent solos, is a constant source of interest, but rather than expatiate on its kaleidoscopic nature, I prefer to end this necessarily brief review by insisting upon the ease with which he combines in this set those two apparently contradictory elements, the novel and the traditional. That feat in itself connotes the deep maturity of his work and does much to explain the impact of this exceptional record.

MICHAEL JAMES

## DAMIAN ROBINSON AND THE RICHMOND SOUND

### SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN:

Damian Robinson (p); unknown other musicians; Barbara Moore, Miles Lewis (arr)

London — 1969

*September in the rain :: Adagio :: At long last love :: Cleo's waltz :: Dream a little dream of me :: You'd be so nice to come home to :: Dancing on the ceiling :: There will never be another you :: Swinging down the lane :: Good feeling :: In the still of the night :: Everytime we say goodbye*

World Record Club ST 982 (29/11d.)

LIGHTLY swinging arrangements of some nice tunes, Damian Robinson's late-night piano doodlings, and that's about it. All very tastefully done — and there are odd jazz flourishes, as in the introduction to *September in the rain* where the saxes sound as if they're about to launch into *Early autumn* — but I can't really see it appealing to readers of this magazine.

The sleeve is uninformative about the musicians in the Richmond Sound, and it doesn't tell us much about Damian Robinson, Barbara Moore or Miles Lewis either. All in all, a record to be passed over. One wonders who it is meant for?

JIM BURNS

## ADRIAN ROLLINI

### ADRIAN ROLLINI AND HIS ORCHESTRA 1935-1936:

#### ADRIAN AND HIS TAP ROOM GANG:

Wingy Manone (tpt, vcl-1); Joe Marsala (clt, alt); Adrian Rollini (bs-sx, xyl, vib); Putney Dandridge (p, vcl-2); Carmen Mastren (g); Sid Weiss (bs); Sam Weiss (d); Jeanne Burns (vcl-3)

New York City — June 14, 1935

- BS 092263-1 *Bouncin' in rhythm*
- BS 092264-1 *I got a need for you -1,3*
- BS 092265-1 *Weather man-1,4*
- BS 092266-1 *Nagasaki-2, 5*
- BS 092267-1 *Honeysuckle rose-2*
- BS 092268-1 *Jazz o' jazz-3*

-4 talking by Hilton 'Nappy' Lamare on this track, which makes it likely that he is the guitarist on the session, not Mastren as listed;

-5 group vocal responses on this track.

#### LITTLE RAMBLERS:

Gordon Griffin (tpt); unknown (tbn); Sid Stoneburn (clt); Adrian Rollini (p); unknown g; bs; d; Fred McElmurry (vcl)

New York City — July 31, 1935

- BS 092794-1 *Truck in'*
- BS 092786-1 *Streamlined Gretna Green*
- BS 092797-1 *Loveless love*

Ward Pinkett (tpt, vcl); Albert Nicholas (clt); Adrian Rollini (vib); Jack Russin (p); Danny Barker (g); Joe Watts (bs); Sammy Weiss (d)

New York City — October 5, 1935

- BS 095338-2 *I'm on a see-saw*
  - BS 095339-1 *Red sails in the sunset*
- Sterling Bose (tpt); unknown (tbn); Sid Stoneburn (clt); unknown (ten); Adrian Rollini (p); unknown (bs); Sam Weiss (d); Ted Wallace Ed Lloyd (vcl); Charlie Bush (dir)

New York City — November 26, 1935

- BS 098157-1 *A little bit independent*
- BS 098158-1 *You hit the spot*
- BS 098159-1 *Life begins at sweet sixteen*

As for October 5, 1935 session with Bill Dillard (tpt, vcl) replacing Pinkett

New York City — December 27, 1935

### BS 098398-1 *The music goes 'round*

Gordon Griffin (tpt); Lew White (clt); Freddy Fellensby (ten); Adrian Rollini or Bill White (p); Brick Fleagle (g); Felix Giobbe (bs); Jack Maisel (d); Eddie Lloyd (vcl); Charlie Bush (dir)

New York City — January 6, 1936

### BS 098496-1 *The day I let you get away*

RCA(G) @ LPM 10125 (48/6d.)

BY THE time these recordings were made Rollini's finest musical achievements were behind him.

The Little Ramblers performances were very commercially slanted, not least in the presence of various dismal vocalists, though there are worthwhile solo passages to be heard on most tracks. The late Ward Pinkett has vocals on *I'm on* and *Red sails* which while lacking the abandon of his earlier efforts are at least in the jazz mould, and the former has a few bars of pleasant muted trumpet. The remaining L.R. tracks offer good if untypical Bose on *A little bit*, neat Griffin on *The day*, good Nicholas on *The music* (his playing is very routine on the October 1935 date), and competent passages by Rollini and Stoneburn.

The Tap Room Gang tracks are better, two of three vocalists at least having the virtue of eccentricity. Jeannie Burns, heard on *I got a need* (to which Manone replies in those less marihuana conscious days: "I wish you had a weed for me baby") and *Jazz o'* has a husky, vibrato heavy voice that must qualify her as one of the first hip singers, while Putney Dandridge, who sings on *Nagasaki* and *Honeysuckle*, was a sort of early Babs Gonzales, not least in the limitation of his range. These are light-hearted performances with pleasant solos from Manone, Marsala and Rollini himself, the latter taking his only bass sax solo on *Bouncin'*.

On the whole an inconsequential LP. Recording is good, playing time 45 minutes.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

## DAVE SHEPHERD QUINTET

### SHEPHERD'S DELIGHT:

Dave Shepherd (clt); Roger Nobes (vib); Brian Lemon (p); Mike Durell (bs); Johnny Richardson (d)

London — September 3, 1969

*Seven come eleven :: Spain :: Flying home :: N.W.6 :: Chips boogie woogie :: Eccentric :: Fidgety feet :: Softly as in a morning sunrise :: Hi ya Sophia :: I surrender dear :: Little Rock getaway :: I let a song go out of my heart*

77 @ LEU 12/35 (39/5d.)

THAT THIS LP has strong Goodman overtones will surprise nobody who has heard the Shepherd

Quintet in person, but whereas stage performances that I have attended tended to be routine, the present record reflects the individual nature of some of the group's contributions more satisfactorily.

*Spain*, best known from the Bob Crosby version with its fine Fazola solo, is a very good track, and after Shepherd's melodic theme there are good solos from Lemon and Nobes. *Softly, I surrender* and *I let* are also agreeable performances, and the re-working of the old Dixieland warhorses *Eccentric* and *Fidgety* is successful, with Shepherd having one of his best solos on the LP on the former. *N.W.6.*, with a gospel-type theme, never really gets going, and *Chips* and *Flying* suffer from a lack of emotional projection, though *Little Rock* has neat solos all round.

The rhythm section is a good one, Durell in particular playing well, but it is no disrespect to either Shepherd or Nobes who both perform more than capably, to comment that the best and most individual solos on the LP are by Lemon. The pianist has a strong rhythmic ability and his solos always swing, but more than this he has the happy knack of sustaining interest through his talent in presenting unhackneyed and fresh ideas on even the most familiar numbers. So well does he play here that it would be interesting to hear him on a solo LP.

Well recorded, and with a playing time of 47 minutes, this is an LP that should certainly be heard by readers whose primary jazz interest is in the mainstream style.

ALBERT MCCARTHY



## SONNY SIMMONS

MANHATTAN EGOS:

Barbara Donald (tpt); Sonny Simmons (alt); Juma (bs); Paul Smith (d)

Berkeley, California — February 10, 1969

*Coltrane in paradise :: The prober :: Manhattan egos :: Visions*

Sonny Simmons (Eng-horn); Juma (conga d); Voodoo Bembe (vcl, conga d)

same place and date

*Seven dances of salami*

Arhoolie 8003 (52/6d.)

THOUGH Simmons and his associates are working here without the benefit of a recurring harmonic backdrop or, save in one instance, of the regular beat that

was so prominent and beneficial a feature of previous styles, their music is neither static nor does it suffer unduly from weaknesses of continuity. *Coltrane in paradise* has themal sections stated with precision and a declarative strength, and, once Miss Donald begins to improvise, her line's relationship to what has gone before is as evident as the power of her playing. Eschewing the jauntiness of a Don Cherry, her work hews closer to the at times austere methods of Jacques Coursil, yet exhibits a brash, commanding, and in fact distinctive assertiveness. Simmons follows, his lightning runs indebted to Coltrane yet not overwhelmed by the tenorist's influence. His range is considerable and it is only with the very high notes that his tone suffers. A less successful dialogue between the two horns ensues, prefacing further solos by trumpet and bass before the short closing themal passage. The leader, good in this opening item, is more striking still in *The prober*, showing exceptional high register mobility and a flair for resolving the peaks of tension he thus builds up.

*Manhattan egos*, appropriately enough evincing the most crowded textures of the entire set, begins as a keening lament with bass and drum interpolations, but soon shifts from sorrow to anger as Simmons, following Miss Donald, ushers in a series of unusually agitated improvisational strata. *Salami* brings a change of pace; essentially a lightweight outing, it is welcome for the respite it affords in this at times harrowing programme. The theme of the final selection *Visions*, seems to allude both to certain of Ornette Coleman's earlier sketches and, perhaps less expectedly, Thelonious Monk's *Epistrophy*. Simmons comes driving in over the ferocious beat churned up by Smith and Juma to establish an exciting, full-blooded atmosphere that persists throughout.

There can be no doubt that devotees of the latest school will find these 43 minutes exhilarating ones.

MICHAEL JAMES

## SUGAR MAMA BLUES 1949

DAVID WYLIE (vcl, g)

Atlanta — 1949

*Baby you don't mean me no good :: Baby, you're gonna change your mind :: Shackles around my body*

FRANK EDWARDS (vcl, hca) acc unknown 2 g

Atlanta — 1949

1264 *Love my baby*

PEE WEE HUGHES (vcl, hca) acc unknown g; d

New Orleans — 1949

1013 *Sante Fe Blues*

*Sugar mama blues*

*Shreveport blues*

CURLEY WEAVER (vcl, g) acc Blind Willie McTell (g)

Atlanta — 1949

*Brown skin women :: I keep on drinkin'*

DENNIS McMILLIAN (vcl, g)

Linden, N.J. — 1949

R-1055-1 *Woke up one morning*

R-1055-2 *Woke up one morning*

AM-1056 *Poor little angel girl*

R-1057-1 *Paper wooden daddy*

R-1057-2 *Paper wooden daddy*

Biograph M BLP-12009 (52/6d.)

ALL THESE artists had a track on the 'Livin' With The Blues' LP (Realm RM-52209), but

apart from Hughes's *Sante Fe* and McMillian's *Woke up, Poor little* and *Paper wooden* these titles had not been previously issued.

Wylie improves with additional listenings, his best track being the rather moving *Shackles*. He makes full use of vibrato and tends to chop off words at the end of lines, but is generally rather a smooth singer and an excellent guitarist who takes some effective solos. Edwards's *Love* is a rather jivy effort, pleasant without being more than average, which description also applies to Hughes's three tracks. Hughes is a reasonable singer but seems limited in his melodic conception — his three numbers are basically the same theme and he uses a repetitive phrase on them all that soon becomes monotonous. *Sugar Mama* does include a good harmonica solo.

Weaver's two tracks are excellent, particularly *I keep on* which is best known from Little Brother Montgomery's recordings though Weaver uses different lyrics. The strength of these performances, apart from Weaver's good vocals, lie in the fine two guitar passages. McMillian, however, is as good, though the nature of his vocal seems oddly at variance with the double-entendre lyrics of *Paper*. *Woke up* has some striking bottleneck guitar, and the sombre, introspective vocal on both takes is impressive. *Poor* is also very good, with some beautiful guitar work and a mellow, slightly careworn vocal. McMillian is from North Carolina, according to Mike Leadbitter's *Blues Records 1943-1966*, and in my view is a superior artist to many whose 'comebacks' have been widely acclaimed. An interesting, slightly offbeat blues LP, worth having for the Weaver and McMillian titles. Recording quality is satisfactory, playing time 37½ minutes.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

## EARL HINES — ART TATUM — TEDDY WILSON

THE SWING PIANO:

Art Tatum (p)

probably August 1939

*Day in, day out :: Fine and dandy :: I've got the world on a string :: I've gotta right to sing the blues :: I'm coming Virginia*

Teddy Wilson (p)

New York City — May 1, 1946

5462 *Sunny morning*

New York City — May 2, 1946

5477 *Hallelujah*

5480 *Long ago and far away*

add Billy Taylor (bs); Kep Purnell (d)

New York City — December 1, 1947

*Chinatown, my Chinatown*

Earl Hines (p); Paul Binnings (bs); Hank Milo (d)

Los Angeles — July, 1954

*Nice work if you can get it :: Humoresque :: If I had you*

Polydor 623 274 (37/6d.)

THIS RATHER inconsequential collection is rather difficult to review fairly. Our Editor's

sleeve note suggests that the Tatums are probably radio transcriptions and he defends so vehemently the proposition that Tatum was a swinging jazzman that I have not the heart to suggest that he was an arch-decorator seeking a style. Just pretend I didn't say that; the sound is good for the period. The Teddy Wilson Musicrafts are gratifyingly obscure and this will no doubt attract collectors, but musically one wonders whether they might not have remained in decent obscurity. By Wilson's standards they are workaday performances; the solos only come to life for a brief passage in *Long ago and far away* and by far the liveliest performance, *Chinatown, my Chinatown*, is marred by the infinite tedium of the theme. One cannot accuse Hines's tracks of lacking liveliness, but most Hines fanciers will have other recordings which are quite as good and have more variety. This issue might appeal to a jazz lover just developing an interest in piano jazz, but otherwise it seems to me to fall squarely between three — wait for it — piano stools.

JOHN POSTGATE



## TRUMPET BLUES 1925-29

**BEN NORSINGLE** (vcl) acc Don Albert (tpt); Charlie Dixon (tbn-1, brass bs-2); Allen Van (p); John Henry Braggs (g)  
Dallas — c. October 28, 1928

DAL-700-A *Black cat blues-2*  
DAL-701-A *Motherless blues-2*  
DAL-702-A *Red river bottom blues-2*  
DAL-702-A *Rover blues-1*

**TEXAS ALEXANDER** (vcl) acc King Oliver (cnt); Clarence Williams (p); Eddie Lang (g)  
New York City — November 20, 1928

401346-A *Tell me woman blues*

### THOMAS' DEVILS:

Cicero Thomas (tpt); "Mutt" (clt) unknown p; d; Dave Cross (vcl)  
Chicago — c. March 11, 1929

C-3100-A *Boot it boy*

**CLARA HERRING** (vcl) acc unknown tpt; p  
Richmond, Ind. — August 21, 1928

14158-A *Park no more Mama blues*

**BERTHA 'CHIPPIE' HILL** (vcl) acc possibly Shirley Clay (tpt); probably Artie Starks (clt); unknown p  
Chicago — c. October 30, 1928

C-2509 *Trouble in mind*

C-2510 *Hangman blues*

**BILLY AND MARY MACK** (vcl duet) acc Punch Miller (tpt); Edgar Brown (p)

New Orleans — January 22, 1925[

8892-A *Black but sweet, oh God!*

8897-B *My heart breakin' gal*

**LUELLA MILLER** (vcl) acc Dewey Jackson (cnt); James Johnson (p); Lonnie Johnson (g-1, bj-2)

probably St. Louis — c. April 1927

*North wind blues-1 :: East St. Louis blues-2*

**ANN COOK** (vcl) acc Louis Dumaine (cnt); Willie Joseph (clt); Morris Rouse (p); Leonard Mitchell (bj)

New Orleans — March 7, 1927

37981-3 *Mama's cookie blues*

### Historical HLP-27 (52/6d.)

HISTORICAL's issues are improving and though this is an anthology it does have a basic theme to

hold it together.

Norsingle is a good jazz-blue singer with a smooth delivery, clear diction and prominent vibrato. All his tracks are worthwhile, particularly as he is well supported by members of the Don Albert band. Albert's fill-ins are effective even though his solo on *Motherless* reveals a somewhat restricted tone, Dixon's one trombone passage is in the Ike Rodgers tradition, and Braggs's guitar work is very firm and full. Alexander has always been a favourite of mine and he sings splendidly on *Tell me* which also has excellent contributions from Oliver and Lang. *Boot it* has a vaudeville style vocal, a good solo by Thomas, and reasonable clarinet by the mysterious "Mutt". Side one concludes with a competent enough vocal by Clara Herring, but the real interest lies in a very good trumpet player who is well featured in solos and fill-ins. The singer appears to shout "Play it Mr. Ladnier" but Tommy Ladnier was in Europe at the time of the recording, and in any case it is not him on aural evidence. There is a Chicago trumpeter called Calvin Ladner, but his style is unknown to me.

Both *Hangman* and *Trouble* have very fine vocals by Bertha Hill the backing having a first rate trumpeter with a strong tone, fluent technique and considerable rhythmic freedom. It could be Clay but I am doubtful if his playing was as advanced in 1928. *Black* and *My heart* are amusing vaudeville routines in the manner of Butterbeans and Susie, with Miller sounding restricted in comparison to his recorded work of a year or two later. Luella Miller is a tough sounding singer with a dragging, rather flat delivery, her accompanists not getting any opportunities to be heard at length. The formidable Anne Cook's *Mama's* sounds even more aggressive the good vocal being matched by the accompaniment which includes fine Joseph clarinet.

In all, an excellent LP that — as far as I know — presents no duplication problems.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

## COLLECTORS' NOTES

### JUNE CHRISTY

IN THE November, 1967 "Notes" and again in May, 1968 I referred to the June Christy "Something Cool" LP and questioned whether or not the stereo version (Capitol ST516) was a re-make or a "doctored" version of the original mono album (Capitol T516). I have now had an opportunity of checking one against the other and can state categorically that (a) the stereo version is not a "doctored" version but a set of new recordings done, presumably, at the three April, 1960 sessions detailed in the November, 1967 "Notes" and (b) that Art Pepper is definitely present and may be heard taking short solos or obligatos (all on alto) on *A stranger called the blues* and *The night we called it a day*. (Pepper was not present on the original mono issue.)

### DJANGO REINHARDT

CHRIS EVANS (Newport, Mon.) has some pertinent comments to make on the Django section of "Collectors Notes" in the December, 1969 issue: "*Place de Brouckere* on the Concert De Bruxelles LP (Swing, Vogue etc.) is actually the version from November 8, 13, 1947 with an announcement and applause dubbed on. I understand this track was included on the original record to fill up the playing time. The broadcast which Rolf Stuebing refers to comes from a programme called "Rendezvous in Paris" and was recorded in Paris during March, 1947 by Django and Eddie Bernard. This session was listed on page 223 of the Cassell discography, so I didn't include it in my corrections (Collectors Notes, May 1968). I have since found some further information on the session so I will list it here:

**DJANGO REINHARDT** (g); Eddie Bernard (p)  
North American Service of the French Broadcasting System, "Rendezvous in Paris" Program 7,  
Paris — March, 1947

*Theme: No name blues (Minor swing)* International Recording Company Inc. B 119 (16") 7

*Melodie au crepuscule* —

*Castle of my dreams (Manoir de mes rêves)* —

The mystery of "Bobby Lion" and "Mickey Shiller" can be explained as follows: the announcer on the programme says Django is right here in our studio with Bobby Lion and Mickey Shiller and at the end of Django's performance says "Thank you Django Reinhardt, and you too Bobby Lion and Mickey Shiller for bringing Django to our microphone". I don't know the correct spelling of their names, but I would guess that these guys were either connected with the production of the radio programme or perhaps were fans who had arranged for Django to make the broadcast. The version of *R-vingt-six* (November, 1947) has only recently been discovered and features Hubert Rostaing (clt) with Django, the rest being unknown. However, it probably has the guitar-bass-drums rhythm section as used on the other ORTF broadcasts of that period. I haven't got the recording unfortunately. Incidentally there was a minor misprint in the August, 1968 "Notes". For the February 1, 1946 session the note should read omit reference to DR 10026-2 not -1"

### GEORGE WALLINGTON

BOB RHODES of Bradford has received some Blue Note information from Steve LaVere of Liberty Records and has kindly passed it on to me. It concerns the George Wallington session of May, 1954 (four titles of which reappeared recently on Blue Note B6503 "The Beginning And End Of Bop", reviewed in the September, 1969 *Jazz Monthly*). The session should be listed as follows, playing times appearing in parenthesis after complete takes.

### GEORGE WALLINGTON AND HIS BAND:

Dave Burns (tpt); Jimmy Cleveland (tbn); Frank Foster (ten); Danny Bank (bar); George Wallington (p); Oscar Pettiford (bs); Kenny Clarke (d); Quincy Jones (arr)

New York City — May, 1954

1 *Summertime*

(3.30) unissued

29





# QUIRKS

was one of the words used in early alliterative attempts to explain away the jazz byways explored by Roland Kirk. Seen first as highly personal attacks on the fabric of jazz, Kirk's so-called quirks have become a major contribution to jazz as we accept and enjoy it today: a continuous cohesive series of intensely intimate statements.

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**ROLAND KIRK**  
**Volunteered Slavery**  
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**LES McCANN**  
**EDDIE HARRIS**  
**Swiss Movement**  
**588 206**

For a listing of recent LP issues send s.a.e. to Roger Gilbert, Polydor Records Ltd., 17/19 Stratford Place, London W1N 0BL.



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|    |                     |        |                          |
|----|---------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| 2  | Summertime          |        | rejected                 |
| 3  | Summertime          | (3.25) | unissued                 |
| 4  | Summertime          | (3.50) | unissued                 |
| 5  | Summertime          | (3.50) | Blue Note BLP5045        |
| 6  | Festival            | (3.20) | unissued                 |
| 7  | Festival            |        | rejected                 |
| 8  | Festival            | (3.55) | unissued                 |
| 9  | Festival            | (3.53) | Blue Note BLP5045,B6503) |
| 10 | Christina           | (3.30) | Unissued                 |
| 11 | Christina           | (3.32) | unissued                 |
| 12 | Christina           | (3.35) | Blue Note BLP5045        |
| 13 | Frankie and Johnnie | (4.24) | unissued                 |
| 14 | Frankie and Johnnie | (4.00) | Blue Note BLP5045,B6503  |
| 15 | Baby grand          |        | rejected                 |
| 16 | baby grand          | (3.56) | unissued                 |
| 17 | Baby grand          | (3.56) | unissued                 |
| 18 | Baby grand          | (4.00) | Blue Note BLP5045,B6503  |
| 19 | Bumpkins            | (3.50) | Blue Note BLP5045,B6503  |
| 20 | Bumpkins            | (3.40) | unissued                 |
| 21 | Bumpkins            |        | rejected                 |
| 22 | Bumpkins            | (3.35) | unissued                 |
| 23 | Bumpkins            |        | rejected                 |
| 24 | Bumpkins            |        | rejected                 |
| 25 | Bumpkins            | (3.15) | unissued                 |

This explains the apparent anomaly of the Blue Note matrix system at this point. It is probably true to say that by the time the company was recording for microgroove only they simply allocated reference numbers to the titles done at each session. And isn't *Bumpkins* the story of so many jazz sessions in a nut-shell? Seven takes in all and then it was decided to use take one!

## ILLINOIS JACQUET

ANDRE Fonteyne writes in from Turnhout, Belgium to say "I have aurally checked *Diggin' with Doggett* and *Minor romp* by Jacquet on CBS Realm 52389 "Angry Tenors" against the same titles on my ten-inch Savoy MG15024 and I can assure you that these are totally different takes. I wonder if there are more alternative takes on the CBS LP. I don't possess the Ike Quebec or Ben Webster tracks on 78 or on any other microgroove release". This tends to confirm a rumour I heard about the time I first got hold of the "Angry Tenors" LP on Savoy MG14009 some years ago. An acquaintance (exact identity now forgotten) remarked that the "Angry Tenors" LP had several edited tracks; at the time I had the impression he was referring principally to the Ike Quebec tracks.

## LOUIS ARMSTRONG

JOHN POSTGATE has been corresponding with an American collector, John S. Lewis of Arlington, Texas on the subject of "Louis And The Big Bands 1928 - 1930" on Parlophone PMC7074. John reviewed this in the October 1969 *Gramophone* and commented that a violinist could be heard on the instrumental version of *When you're smiling* as Brian Rust's sleeve note made no reference to a violin on this track. John S. Lewis wrote "Mr. Rust, however, nodded about *"Savoyager's stomp"* and *Symphonic raps* (which he claimed in his notes had never been issued in the USA). This coupling, originally issued on Argentine Odeon 193329, was issued in the States on American Columbia as part of a three-record set titled "Jazz Odyssey: Volume 2; *The Sound Of Chicago* (C3L - 32)" in the summer of 1964 and it is still in print." (It was reviewed by the Editor as part of his EMI Imports feature in the December, 1969 *Jazz Monthly*. AM) "The spellings, incidentally, are *Savoyager's stomp* and *Symphonic touches* (Spanish translations?). Because the original record appeared under Carroll Dickerson's name, this Louis item was not identified as such until about 1945 in, as I recall, the *Record Changer*. By the way, my 78 copy of *When you're smiling* on Japanese Columbia lists Carroll Dickerson as the violinist. I bought the disc in Japan about 1953, and in those days each 78 record came equipped with a little printed brochure with the personnel listed in Romaji and in English".

I feel I must point out that Brian Rust gives Dickerson as the violinist in the Armstrong section of *Jazz Records 1897-1931*.



## LENNIE TRISTANO

TWO NOTED jazz writers have sent in confirmation that the original Keynote issues of *Atonement* (matrix KH201) on K-681 by the Lennie Tristano trio is a completely original theme and does not appear on the Mercury "Bebop" LP (SMWL21028) anywhere. (This is in reply to my note in the December, 1969 issue.) The collectors who kindly confirmed this were Carlos de Radzitzky and Owen Peterson. Owen threw more light on the Tristano Keynotes by pointing out that *Night in Tunisia* on the "Bebop" LP has been issued before. It came out in America on a ten-inch EmArcy LP (MG26029) entitled "Holiday For Piano". The LP contains *Tunisia* (under the alternative, or original, title *Interlude*) plus *Out on a limb*, *I surrender dear* and *I can't get started* all by Tristano, and four more titles by Arnold Ross. Owen goes on to say that the uncredited notes to MG26029 states that "bassist Clyde Lombardi... plays on every tune except *Interlude*, where Bob Leininger substitutes. (And *Interlude* is the only one of the four recorded in May of 1947; the rest were cut on October, 1946)". Owen thinks that it is quite possible *Ghost* did, or does, exist and that *Interlude* was from the later session. This would allocate four titles to each of the two Tristano/Keynote dates.

In the light of Owen's information the sessions probably comprise the following: Lennie Tristano (p); Billy Bauer (g); Clyde Lombardi (bs)

New York City — October 8, 1946

HL176 *Out on a limb*/ HL177 *I can't get started*/ HL178 *I surrender dear*/ HL179 *Ghost* (latter title still unissued).

Lennie Tristano (p); Billy Bauer (g); Bob Leininger (bs);

New York City — May 23, 1947

KH200 *Blue boy*/ KH201 *Atonement*/ KH202 *Coolin' off with Ulanov*/ KH203 *Interlude* (latter title on Mer(E) SMWL21028 as *Night in Tunisia* and incorrectly listed on sleeve as having matrix HL179 and coming from October, 1946 session.)

If and when the genuine *Ghost* ever materializes, what's the betting it turns out to be another version of (*I don't stand a chance* (with you)?)

ALUN MORGAN

## BOOK REVIEW

**BLACK MUSIC** by LeRoi Jones

(Published by MacGibbon & Kee, 221 pp, 36/-)

LeROI JONES, whose suitably truculent portrait glares from this book's back flap, once appeared

to be a poet, playwright, and storyteller of promise. He has become a minor demagogue of black hatred and a somewhat tendentious jazz critic. I find it hard to escape the feeling that he is a poseur. I don't much mind the tendentiousness, which seasons *Black Music* quite liberally and adds tang. What bothers me is the balance of his tastes. 'John Tchicai makes music of a very different nature than Shepp's, but it is also very moving music... His tone is dry, acrid, incisive; his line spare and lean, like himself; and his playing at times reminds one of Mondrian's geometrical decisions, or lyrical syllogisms.' (P.119) Fine... But, in the same essay, '... lovely Dionne Warwick ... *Any old time of day*, and please listen to *Walk on by*. It will really turn you inside.' Well, I don't deny that one might enjoy both Tchicai and Warwick; but to include both in an advocacy of this sort, even in a popular, commercial magazine makes the advocate a little suspect. Dionne gets two more mentions in the book. Martha and the Vandellas and the Supremes are in there too. (Even poor, white Tony Russell has discerned the fakery of such people.)

As will be expected, most of *Black Music* is devoted to the newer jazz musicians. It is a collection of, in the main, magazine articles, some casual, and sleeve-notes, spanning the years 1962-67. The writing's manner changes markedly as the sequence progresses. Earlier pieces are either straight criticism or interviews, with some very perceptive and useful passages (about the true meaning of 'technique', for example); the later ones are more impressionistic, groping for a style but never quite grasping it, and the obscenities bloom more readily. Even in the steadier passages, you are likely

to meet effusions that seem to come straight out of the columns of some women's magazine.

Compare: 'Bop also carried with it a distinct element of social protest, not only in the sense that it was music that seemed antagonistically nonconformist, but also that the musicians who played it were loudly outspoken about who they thought they were. "If you don't like it, don't listen", was the attitude, which seems to me now as rational as you can get.' (p.23), with this (on 'bohemian white groups'): 'The Black tip for them is a super-live life thing as well. The music... lyrics, with instructions to "tune in, turn on, drop out", and sound an electronic Indian Raga... as a meditative eclipse of present reality, a yoga, saddhu (sic) pop. But in play will still drop out of their society like new Beat thing. Out of it! Yeh. But what to do about what ain't out of it. Like there are people dying, etc. Bullshit.' (p.206).

The best things in *Black Music* are the informative portraits of artists such as Roy Haynes, Wayne Shorter, Dennis Charles, Archie Shepp, Don Cherry, and others. It was in reading the Archie Shepp piece in *Down Beat* several years ago that I first met the terminology which Jones has developed into a philosophy. 'Archie expresses the weight of black in his thinking, which is also, of course, in his playing.' (p.154) So jazz is 'black music'; and white musicians do not 'so far... realise their function in jazz.' (Pace Shepp, p.155) Those of us who have been giving the Negro his massive due for decades, while, at the same time, acknowledging the genius of Bix, the Teagardens, Pee Wee Russell, Sims, Mulligan, and others, have been compromising our orthodoxy all along. For me (though it wasn't always so), all orthodoxies are suspect... Jones's included. (Maybe he compromises his orthodoxy too... But for 'lovely Dionne', perhaps it's worth it!) He gives passing mention to Chet Baker, Carisi, Getz, Cohn, Sims, Brubeck, Brookmeyer, Red Rodney, Carla Bley, and a few more non-Blacks, but genuine assessment of their function or malfunction is bypassed.

Many have hoped, for years, to see a really significant book on jazz from the pen of a Negro. *Black Music* isn't it. The laudatory quotes on the jacket are about 'Blues People', but the fact is concealed. They apply only remotely to this subsequent work.

There are some photographs, including a Coptic ikon of Sun Ra, for whom, if you didn't know, 'music is a priestly concern.' Joe Oliver and King Oliver, who appear separately in the index, both led the Creole Jazzband in the black, black days of yore. 'Oh, play that (super-live life) thing!'

ERIC THACKER

City of Leeds Education Committee

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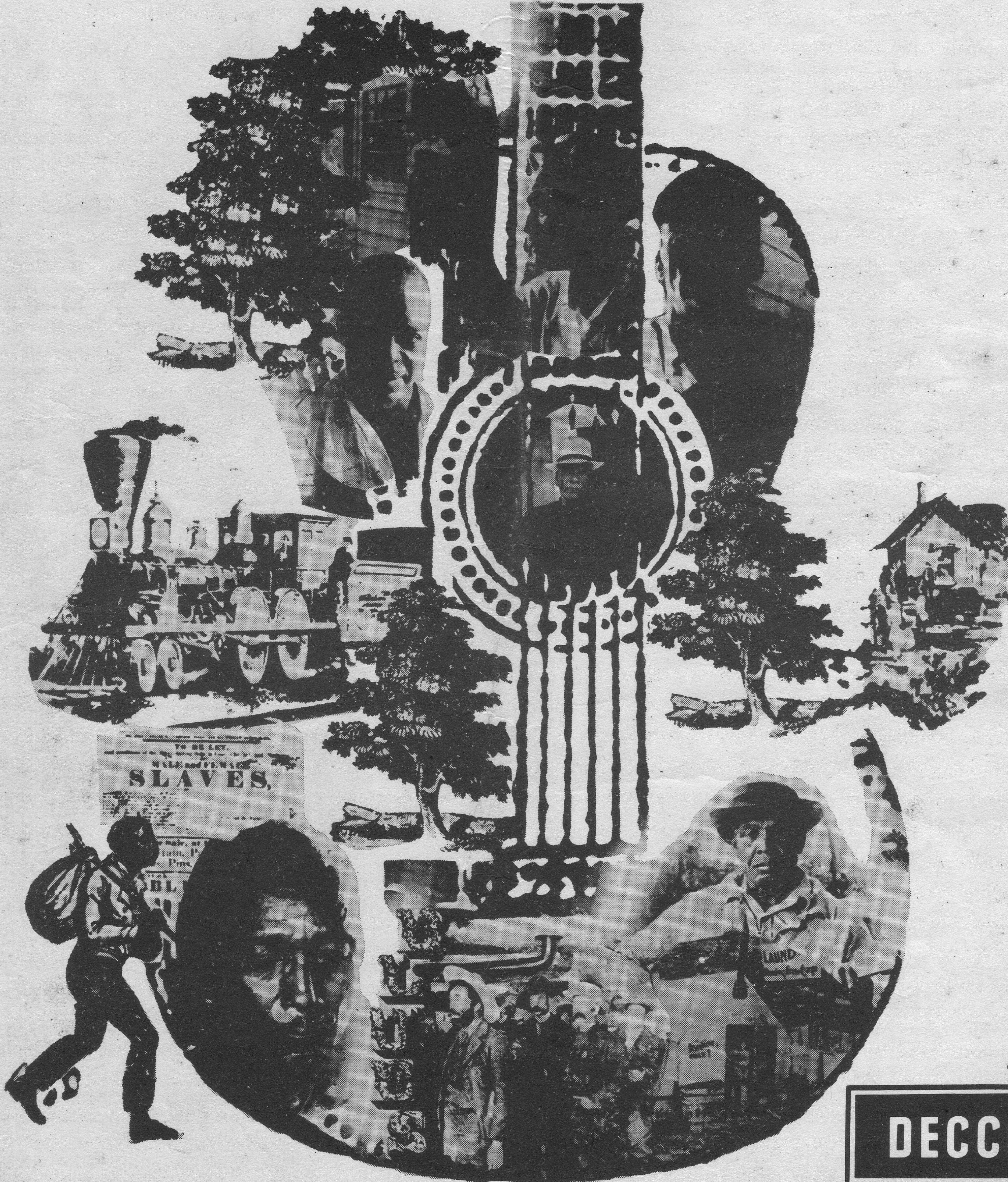
Full details and application forms from the Director, The Music Centre, Cookridge Street, Leeds, 2. quoting ref: A/JM.



# Goin' up the country

Recorded in Louisiana and Mississippi in 1966 by David Evans, this record is one of the most important blues recordings available. In Evans' own words 'These fifteen performances show that the country blues are far from dead as a creative musical form. Indeed, they display signs of having many more years of healthy life ahead of them!' This record is surely essential for people interested in blues, and is a remarkable addition to the Jazz catalogue.

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L. V. Conerly Bad Luck And Trouble  
Mager Johnson Travelling Blues; Big Road Blues  
O. D. Jones Got The Blues This Morning  
Jack Owens B. & O. Blues; Devil Got My Woman  
Boogie Bill Webb Dooleyville Blues



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